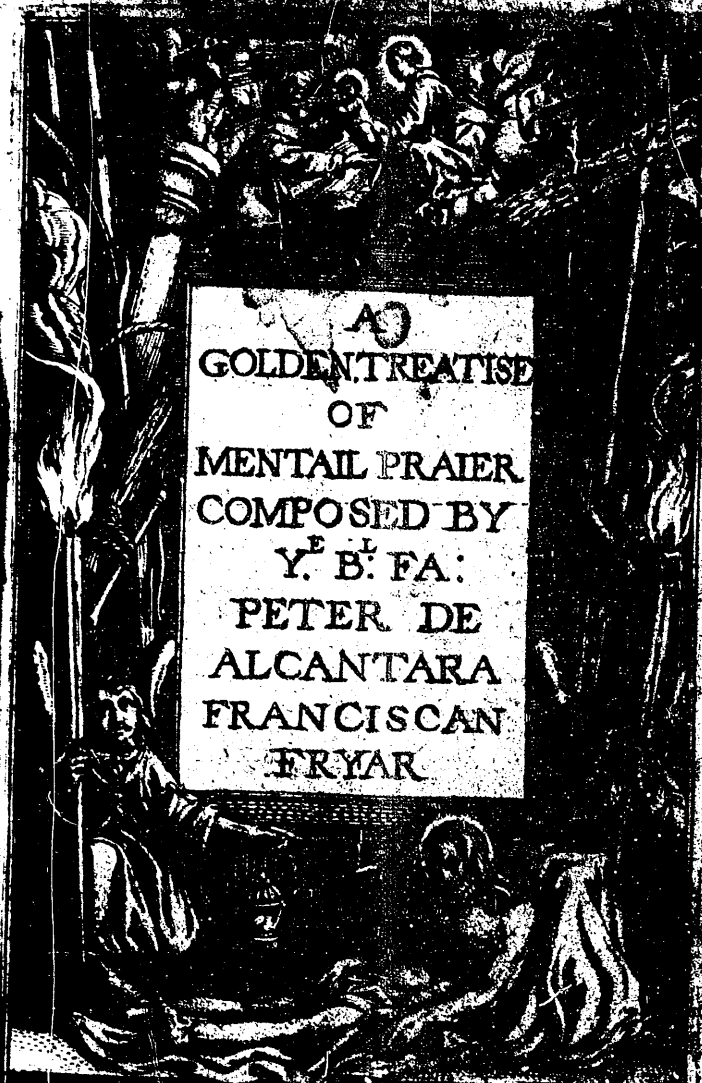


1765. 44 47



A  
GOLDENTREATISE  
OF  
MENTAIL PRAIER  
COMPOSED BY  
Y.<sup>E</sup> B.<sup>E</sup> FA:  
PETER DE  
ALCANTARA  
FRANCISCAN  
FRYAR

AT BRUXELLES  
By the Widowe of Hubert Antony  
Called *vepius* in 1632



*Verus servus Dei F. PETRVS DE ALCANTARA Hisp. Ordinis Minor. de Observ. S. P. Franc. Discal. fund. Prou. S. Ioseph. a qua plures alia donauerunt, ac P. Spirituales B. M. Teresia de Iesu.*

A  
GOLDEN TREATISE  
OF  
MENTALL PRAIER,

With diuerse spirituall rules and directions,  
no lesse profitable then necessaric  
for all sortes of people.

First composed by the venerable and blessed Fa-  
ther, F. R. PETER DE ALCANTARA,  
of the Seraphicall Order of S. Francis. Beatified  
the 18. of Aprill. 1622.

Translated into English by G. VV.

To vvhich is prefixed a breife relation of the life, and  
death of the same Father vvritten by G. VV.  
of the same Order and obseruance.



AT BRVXELLES,

By the Widowe of HVBERT ANTONE, called  
*Velpius*, sworne Printer of the Court, at the  
signe of the golden Eagle by the  
Palacc. 1632.

*Permissu Superiorum.*



TO THE RIGHT  
HONOURABLE  
AND TRULY  
VERTUOUS LADY,  
THE LADY  
ELIANOR  
POWERS, &c.

*All prosperitie in this world,  
and euerlastinge glorie in  
the world to come.*



ADAM,

Although the  
greatnes of your  
blood doth chalenge much

a 3 ref.

## THE EPISTLE

respect, yet I knowe by experience, that your LADISHIP thinketh vertue to be only and true nobilitie; and that to be Gods seruāt, you esteeme it your greatest glorie. This therefore vertuous and religious disposition of yours, beinge the only loadstone that dravveth my affection to loue, and honour you, hath emboldened me to present vnto your LADISHIPS veivve, this little treatise of mental prayer, vvith the life of the Authour, vvich longe since, and alvvayes from  
the

## DEDICATORIE.

the first time I tooke it in hand, I intēded to shrowde vnder the vvinges of your protection, but beinge hindered by some occasions, vvherin holy obedience hath employed me; I could neuer compass my desires till nowe. I nowe therefore send it to your LADISHIP desiringe you to accept of it, not for my desertes, vvich indeede haue bene none to claime such a fauour, but for the dignitie of the matter of vvich it treateth ( though I am afraied made much vvorse



THE EPIST. DEDIC.  
by my vnskilfull pen ) as  
also for the sanctitie of the  
Authour vvho made it, and  
your LADISHIP vvill in-  
crease my many obliga-  
tions tovvardes you, and  
alvvayes oblige me to rest  
and remaine.

M A D A M,

Your honors poore beadsman,

GILES VVILLOUGHRY.



A  
BREIFE RELATION  
OF  
THE LIFE AND DEATH  
OF  
THE BLESSED FATHER  
FR. PETER DE  
ALCANTARA,  
FRANCISCAN FRYAR.

*Written by G. VV. of the same Order &  
obseruance.*

THE PROLOGVE.

**M**isericordias Do-  
mini in æternum  
cantabo. (a) *I will* (a) *psalm. 88.*  
*singe the mercies of*  
*our Lord for euer, saith that*  
*Kingly Prophet DAVID:*  
*And*

THE PROLOGVE.

And not without cause: for so great and vnspeakable, are the mercie-workes of the almightie; which out of the bowells of his infinite goodnes, he hath shewed to mankinde from the first instant of his creation, that the toungues of men and Angells are neuer able to expresse them.

How wonderfull was this benefit; that creatinge man after his owne (b) image and likenes, (c) he would haue made him partaker of eternall felicitie, and vested with his originall iustice, without (d) death or any passage by misery would haue associated him with the companie of Angells, if he had not, by his owne default, violated the lawes of his creatour? not withstandinge this act of malice, the diuine

(b) Gen. 1. 26.

(c) Magister sent. lib. 2. dist. 10.

(d) Gabriel. lib. 2. dist. 19. quest. vnica. art. 2.

THE PROLOGVE.

diuine clemencie would not suffer the worke of his powerfull handes, so to perish: but he accordinge to the diuersitie of times, (e) alwaies ordeined opportune remedies, to reduce wanderinge man to the right way of his owne saluation. Nowe manifestinge his diuine pleasure by the meanes of Angells: nowe sendinge the Patriarchs replenished with his heauenly grace, who by their good example, might stirr them vp to pietie: then sendinge the Prophets illuminated with his holy spirit, not only to preach the present benefits exhibited to mankinde, but also to foretell the future incarnation of the Sonne of God, with the mysterie of his death and passion, by meanes of which man should be loosed from the power of Sathan, and

(e) Scotus lib. 4. dist. 1. qu. 7. n. 2.

THE PROLOGVE.  
and eased of the heauy loade of his  
transgressions.

(f) (Relig'oli)  
Ecclēsie pars  
selectior, &  
sapientior; si-  
quidem is sa-  
pientiores ha-  
bent, quā  
reliqui mar-  
tialium vul-  
gus, qui seip-  
sos à mundi  
cōfortio jēgre-  
garunt, ut vi-  
tā suam Deo  
consecrārent.  
Nazianz ora  
in laudē Basi-  
lij \* Beati illi  
certē, ac ter  
beati, ut qui  
Dei amore sta-  
grāunt, atq;  
ob eius amorē  
omnia pro ni-  
hilo duxerūt,  
siquidē lacri-  
mas profudē-  
runt dieq; ac  
noctē in luctu  
versati sunt,  
ut aeternam  
consolationem  
adipiscerētur:

Thus farr hath that impene-  
trable abyss of the diuine clemencie,  
sweetly disposed all thinges, requi-  
site for the sauinge of the soule of  
man. But if we will extend our  
thoughtes a little further, and call  
to mind the great benefits, still  
heaped vpon man, after the ascen-  
sion of our blessed Sauour, we shall  
finde them innumerable. VVho is  
not astonished at the vocation of  
mankinde, that the Apostolicall  
trumpet of a fewe men, soundinge  
to humane eares, the Euangelicall  
truth, through the wholl world,  
should rouse vp (f) soules makinge  
thē \* happy & thrice happy to for-  
sake all worldly vanities? to be-  
take themselues to a state of per-  
fection;

THE PROLOGVE.  
fection; to sell all they haue and  
giue to the poore: to liue in perpe-  
tuall chastitie, and simple obedience:  
to spend their dayes in rigorous pe-  
nance, watchinge, fastinge and  
prayer, and finally to renounce all  
the seeming pleasures (for (g) true  
there are none) which the flatte-  
ringe world could afford vnto thē.

These thinges are dayly put  
in practice by many, who professe  
the gospell of Christ. For where  
Catholique Religion flourisheth,  
we see diuerse Monasteries of  
men and women, filled with reli-  
gious soules, who consecrate them-  
selues a perpetuall sacrifice to the  
almightie.

How many religious doe vve  
see honoured vvith Priestly fun-  
ction, (an office requiringe more  
then

carues sua  
fame & liti,  
& vigilijs  
consecratis, ut  
illic paradisi  
dilia, &  
gaudia illos  
ex iperent.  
Damascen. in  
bist. B. Iosa-  
phit.  
(g) Consolatio  
mūdi vilis, &  
ad nihilū vti-  
lis, & quod  
magis metue-  
dum est, vera  
& salubris  
consolationis  
impedimentū.  
D. Ber. in ser-  
vir. Natin sic  
se habēt vni-  
uersa sub sa-  
le, ut nihil sit  
in eis verē  
iucundū, om-  
nis siquidem  
laboris reme-  
dium, alterius  
laboris inisiū  
est. Idem in  
se m. de pri-  
mordijs &  
medijs noniff.  
Vide plura  
apud Hierom.

THE PROLOGVE.

Platū de bono then humane (h) puritie and a  
 Rat. relig. l. 3. burthen scarcely to be supported by  
 cap. 1. Angels shoulders) executing their  
 (h) Quo non charge vvith great integritie of  
 oportet esse minde, carefull of their ovvne, and  
 puriorem tali charge vvith great integritie of  
 fruētiē sacri- minde, carefull of their ovvne, and  
 scio? quo sola- zealous of the sauinge of their  
 ri radio non neighbours soules, vvho by their  
 splendidiorem holy doctrine and exemplare liues,  
 manū carnem preach to the Christian vvorld a  
 hanc diuident. reformation: vvho spare noe paines  
 tem? os quod or tedious trauelles, to propagate the  
 igni spiritali faith  
 repletur, lin- And Pope Gelafius vvritinge to Elpidius Bishop, doth  
 guā qua tre- excellently set dovvne the great purity required to  
 mendo nimis Priestly function sayinge: Sacrosancta Religio que Catholi-  
 sanguine ru- cam continet disciplinam, tantam sibi reuerentiam vendicat, vt ad  
 bescit. Sic D. eam quilibet nisi pura conscientia, non audeat peruenire: nam  
 Chrys. hom. quomodo ad diuini mysterij consecrationem celestis spiritus inuo-  
 83. in Mat. catus adueniat, si sacerdos & qui eam adesse deprecatur crimi-  
 nosi plenus actionibus reprobis: ut l. q. 1. e. SACROSANCTA.

Although a vvicked Priest doth consecrate and admini-  
 ster the Sacramentes truely, yet he sinneth greiuiously in  
 eōsecratinge, & administratinge vvith vorthily, Sacrificia im-  
 piarum eis ipsi soberunt qui offerunt impiē. l. q. 1. c. PER ISAIAH,  
 necesse est, vt esse munda studeat manus, que diluere sordes con-  
 rat: ne tacta queque deteritis inquinat, si sordida ipsa stercoris lu-  
 tum tenet. Greg. in regesto. l. 1. Epist. 24. & ponitur l. qu. 1. cap.  
 NECESSE EST.

THE PROLOGVE.

faith of IESVS CHRIST, to  
 heathens and insidells; vvho coura-  
 giously labour in God almighties  
 vineyard, exposinge their liues for  
 the name of IESVS. Indies  
 both east and vvest are vvitnesses  
 of their zealous and heroick spi-  
 rits, there they sealed the truth of  
 the gosPELL vvith the effusion of  
 their sacred blood. Yea vvhat actes  
 memorable in the church of God  
 are there, vvberin (i) these men  
 haue not had a very greate stroke.  
 And finally they so well employ, and  
 multiply those talentes, vvhich the  
 great commaunder of heauen and  
 earth, hath bestovved vpon them  
 here, that assuredly they may ex-  
 pect an eternall reVVard in the  
 Kingedome of heauen hereaf-  
 ter.

(i) Hieron.  
 Platus de bo-  
 no status re-  
 lig. l. 2. c. 30.

But

THE PROLOGVE.

(k) Nuptie  
replet terram  
virginitas  
paradisum. D.  
Hieron.

(l) Flos est il-  
le Ecclesiastici  
germinis, de-  
cus atque or-  
namentum gra-  
tie spiritua-  
lis, laeta, indol-  
lis, laudis &  
bonoris, opus  
integrum atq;  
incorruptum,  
Dei imagine re-  
spondens, ad  
sanct. moniam  
Dni, illustrior  
portio gregis  
Christi, gau-  
det per ipsas,  
atque in illis  
largiter floret  
S. Matris Ec-  
clesiae gloriosa  
fecunditas, plus  
quantoq; plus  
gloriosa Vir-  
ginitas nu-  
mero suo ad-  
dit, tanto plus  
gaudium ma-  
tris augefcit.  
Cyp. de habit.  
virg. l. 4 c. 24

But that which is more admi-  
rable, to see a multitude of the  
weaker sexe, to abandon all world-  
ly pleasures: they who in the world  
might haue swome in brauery, and  
haue had all things at their owne  
commaund; to inclose themselues in  
a retired Cloister, there to spend  
their dayes in penance, and to  
consecrate the very flower of their  
springing youth, a sweet smelling  
sacrifice to their celestiall spouse  
CHRIST IESVS. These truly  
are those that (k) fill and beautifie  
the garden of paradise with lillies  
of puritie: these are the (l) flowers  
of our holy mother the Catholique  
Church, which make her glorious  
and fruitfull. These are they, that  
make that happie chaunge, amo-  
ments fadinge pleasure, for an im-

mor-

THE PROLOGVE.

mortall crowne of glorie.

Thus we see perpetuall riuers  
streaminge from the fountaine of  
God almighties mercie. But let vs  
descend a litle further into his  
aboundant charitie, and take notice  
of his fatherly prouidence, that in  
process of declininge times, when  
the blood of our redeemer, hath of-  
tentimes begun to wax cold in the  
hearts of men, he would not suffer  
it altogether to be extinguished, but  
accordinge to varietie of times, ne-  
uer ceased to repaire his church by  
the ministry of some elected seruants,  
whom he sent into this world as se-  
cond Apostles, who by their exam-  
ple, and doctrine might drawe men  
out of the mire of their sinnes, re-  
newe the feruour of our blessed Sa-  
uiours passion, and reduce collapsed

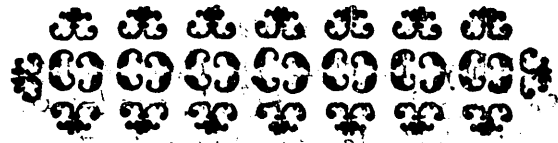
b

disci-

THE PROLOGVE.  
*discipline to her former rigour.  
 Many hath he sent for this end, and  
 amongst many this blessed Saint,  
 S. PETER DE ALCAN-  
 TARA, a man from his very  
 cradle consecrated to Euangelicall  
 perfection; he was a faithfull labour-  
 ver in our Lords vineyard, with  
 great fidelitie performinge his com-  
 manded task, as it will plainly ap-  
 peare by that which followeth in  
 his life.*



CHAP.



CHAP. I.  
 OF THE BIRTH  
 AND  
 EDUCATION,  
 OF BLESSED  
 ALCANTARA,

*And of his enteringe into  
 Religion.*

**H**IS blessed Saint was  
 borne at (a) Norba Casa-  
 rea, vulgarly called AL-  
 CANTARA, in the yeare  
 of our Lord 1499. in the  
 reigne of Pope ALEXANDER the  
 sixth, and FERDINANDO Catholique  
 Kinge of Spaine. His Father was called  
 BACHILIER GARAVITO, and  
 his Mother MARIA VILLELA  
 DE SENABRIA, both of good  
 qualitie, but especially honoured for  
 their vertues.

(a) Civitas  
 Hispania mi-  
 litia ordinis  
 Alcantarensis  
 clara. Iste or-  
 do prout con-  
 stat ex priuil.  
 illi concessio  
 an. Dñi 1174.  
 fuit institutus  
 à Dño Gome-  
 sio Hernandez  
 tempore Fer-  
 dinandi 2. Re-  
 gis, & appro-  
 batus ab Alex.  
 3. Batio 3.º  
 Innoc. 4.º Bull.  
 99. Reg. id 1.  
 qu. 4.º art. 4.º

b 2

They

*The life*

They brought vp their young Sonne in the feare of God, and sowed in him the seedes of vertue; they put him to schoole where, as he profited in learninge, so his obedience towards his parentes did likewise increase. Although he was a child, yet he withdrew himselfe from the common sportes of children, and sorted himselfe amongst men, whome he sawe inclined to deuotion. In these his tender yeares he addicted himselfe, to the workes of mercie: he applied himselfe seriously to learne the Christian doctrine: he often visited churches, and holy places, he frequented the Sacramentes, and continually employed himselfe in good workes: all which did abundantly preface his future sanctitie, but more confirmed it, by that which followed immediately, for he was skarce sixtene yeares of age, when, before he knewe, he began to loath the world, and when the young sparkes of his vertues began to breake into a flame of deuotion. He opened the doores of his soule to the inspirations of the holy Ghost: and as he excelled his fellowe studentes in science, so he knewe that all (b) science, was ignorance without the right knowledge of God.

(b) *Quid profuerit ea que agenda sunt scire ei, qui ea ad opus non perdat. D. Crys. bo. 13. ad Rom.*

*of blessed Alcantara.*

God. Therefore from that time forward he applied his minde to heavenly wisdom, and busied himselfe chiefly to knowe what should be most acceptable to his sacred Maiestie.

About that time, there was a famous and reformed monastery of FRANCISCANS in the prouince of S. GABRIEL, three miles from VALENTIA, whether he addressed himselfe, there to bringe his good desires to a ioyfull periode. But as he went alonge towards this place, he came to a great riuer, called *Tiartar*, which without boate, was impossible to be passed ouer. He seeinge this vnexpected barr, to stop his happy iournie, looked about, hopinge to espye some waterman, who might carry him ouer, but when he could see none, to giue him any assistance: he cast his eies to heauen, and with great anxietie lamented this unhappie hindrance. Behold! vpon the suddaine (as he himselfe related) (c) he was miraculously transported on the other side of the riuer, without any notable motion, that he could perceiue.

(c) *Marianus in eius vita cap. 1.*

This miracle was not vnlike to that, when the riuer of Iordane stood still for the Children of ISRAEL to pass;

*The life*

or when S. PETER walked vpon the waues of the sea: and indeed, it was no small beginnige of God almighties many fauours, exhibited to this blessed Saint.

This obstacle beinge remoued, he passed the other part of his way, (the holy Ghost beinge his guide) without any difficultie, and at length ariued to his desired harbour, this solitarie monasterie, situated amongst great rocks, which they comonly call *Los Manxerendes*, where he came to the Fathers, and asked the habit of S. FRANCIS of them, who did graunt it to him with as much charitie, as he begged it with humilitie.

But when this blessed Saint considered his poore habitation, sequestred from the companie of men, and abstracted from all worldly tumoules. And when he sawe himselfe vested in his penitentiall weede, we may well imagine with what meditacions he spurred himselfe forward in God almighties seruice. He spake to his owne soule these or the like wordes, behold, thou hast nowe accomplished thy desire, thou art nowe arriued to the land of promise, and chined vp to the,

(d) hi-

*of blessed Alcantara.*

(d) highest mountaine of God al-  
mighties fauour to mortall mā in this  
vale of misery (that is) the sacred state  
of a religious life, where, by howe  
much more thou art sequestred from  
the pleasures of the flatteringe world,  
the more thou enioyest the freedom  
of thy spirit. Thou art nowe come to  
the house of God, in which it is better  
for the to be an abiect then to dwell  
in the courtes of Princes; all occasions  
of offendinge thy creatour are nowe  
taken a way, thy soule is nowe sure  
not to be defiled with the pitch of  
euill conuerfation. Thy companie  
nowe are (e) terrestriall Angels, who  
though they lue on earth, yet they  
haue their conuerfation in heauen, all  
whose actions incite thee to nothinge  
else but to aspire vnto perfection.  
Thou findest here no snares to en-  
tangle thee in worldly vanities, no  
flatterers to applaud thee when thou  
doest offend, or any thinge else to  
withdrawe thy affection from the  
Cross of CHRIST. Thy beloued  
spouse hath brought thee nowe into  
this holy desert, to recreat thy soule  
with his heauenly consolatiōs (f) here  
abstracted from all wordly tumoules,

b 4

it may

(d) *Hec terra  
montuosa,  
in sublimi fi-  
sa quantum a  
delicijs seculi  
vacat tantis  
maiores habet  
delicias spiri-  
tus. D. Hier.  
l. 1. Epistolae-  
rum. Epist. 3.  
ad Eusebium.*

(e) *Quo nomi-  
ne appellem  
nescio, homi-  
nes caelestes  
an Angelos  
terrestres de-  
gentes in ter-  
ris, sed con-  
uersationem  
habentes in  
caelis. D. Ber-  
nard. serm. ad  
fratres de  
monte Dei.*

(f) *Anima a  
corporeis cu-*



*The life*

or when S. PETER walked vpon the waues of the sea: and indeed, it was no small beginnige of God almighties many fauours, exhibited to this blessed Saint.

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(d) hi,,

*of blessed Alcantara.*

(d) highest mountaine of God al- (d) *Hec terra*  
mighties fauour to mortall mā in this, *montuosa, &*  
vale of misery (that is) the sacred state, *in sublimi si-*  
of a religious life, where, by howe, *ta quantum a*  
much more thou art sequestred from, *delicijs seculi*  
the pleasures of the flatteringe world,, *vacas tantis*  
the more thou enioyest the freedom,, *maiores habet*  
of thy spirit. Thou art nowe come to, *delicias spiri-*  
the house of God, in which it is better, *tus. D Hier.*  
for the to be an abiect then to dwell,, *rum. Epist. 3.*  
in the courtes of Princes; all occasions,, *ad Esau. 11.*  
of offendinge thy creatour are nowe,,  
taken a way, thy soule is nowe sure,,  
not to be defiled with the pitch of,,  
euill conuersation. Thy companie,,  
nowe are (e) terrestriall Angels, who,, (e) *Quo nomi-*  
though they liue on earth, yet they,, *ne appellem*  
haue their conuersation in heauen, all,, *nescio, homi-*  
whose actions incite thee to nothings,, *nes caelestes*  
else but to aspire vnto perfection., *an Angelos*  
Thou findest here no snares to en- *terrestres de-*  
tangle thee in worldly vanities, no,, *gentes in ter-*  
flatterers to applaud thee when thou,, *ris, sed con-*  
doest offend, or any thinge else to,, *uersationem*  
withdrawe thy affection from the,, *habentes in*  
Cross of CHRIST. Thy beloued,, *caelis. D. Ber-*  
spouse hath brought thee nowe into,, *nard. serm. ad*  
this holy desert, to recreate thy soule,, *fratres de*  
with his heauenly consolatiōs (f) here,, *monte Dei.*  
abstracted from all worldly tumoules,, (f) *Anima a*  
it may,, *corporeis cu-*

*The life*

*piditibus li-* it may attend only to diuine wisdom,  
*bera in aula* & the noise of all temporall cares, be-  
*mentis possit* inge hyst & silent, it may be wholly  
*diuine vacare* employed in sacred contemplation, &  
*Sapientia, ubi* rauished with eternall pleasures. God,  
*omni strepitu* almightie hath nowe wasted thee,  
*terrenarum* ouer this troublesome sea, and placed  
*silente cara-* thee heere, in the quiete harbour of  
*rum, in medi-* thy saluation, in which state in respect  
*tationibus* of thy former, thou art farr more  
*sanctis, & in* sure to (g) fall seldomer, rise sooner,  
*delicijs lere-* stand more securely, liue more  
*tur eternis.* sweetly, and dye more confidently.  
*S. Leo in ser-* Goe too, I say, why standest thou  
*u. de ieiunio* still? why camest thou hether? Con-  
*10. mensis, &* sider thy course habit, and see what  
*elem* penance it exacteth? Looke vpon  
*(g) In Reli-* the place, and reflect what spirit it  
*gione homo* teacheth thee? be couragious and  
*viuit purius,* make no delay, thy death is certaine,  
*cadit rariis,* and thy hower vncertaine, the iudge is  
*surgit velo-* at hand, (h) Alas! the pleasure of this  
*cius, incedit* world is short, but the punishment for  
*cautiùs, quies-* it perpetuall. A little sufferinge here  
*cit securius,* and infinite glorie hereafter. Thus,  
*irroratur cre-* this newe soldiar of CHRIST spent  
*brius, purga-* his time, in holy discourses, sometimes  
*tur citius, mo-* of God almighties maiestie, sometimes  
*uitar confidē-* of his owne miserie: although his pre-  
*tius, manera-* cedent conuersation to Religion was a  
*tur copiosius.* mir-  
*Idem. Hom.*  
*simile est re-*  
*gnū alorum,*  
*homini nego-*  
*iatori.*  
*(h) Fr. vera-*  
*ta extort. ad*  
*fructus.*

*of blessed Alcantara.*

mirrour of perfection, yet he stooode not  
 still in that grace, he had already got-  
 ten, but continually aspired to higher,  
 in which he farr excelled his fellowe  
 nouices. Two vertues were cheifly emi-  
 nent in him: simplicitie and puritie. He  
 likewise had a perfect obliuion of all  
 wordly thinges. He greedily desired,  
 and willingly accepted of the inferiour,  
 and basest employmentes of the mona-  
 sterie. Neither did he esteeme it a dis-  
 honour to him to cast himselfe at the  
 feete of the Friers, but was most wil-  
 linge to serue euery one at their beck. In  
 this his first yeare he laied such groundes  
 of humilitie, that in his wholl life after  
 he was a rare example, and patterne of  
 this vertue. Neither when he was pro-  
 moted to superioritie, did he leaue of  
 his humble exercises. Thus goinge from  
 grace to grace, from vertue to vertue, his  
 good example was a burninge lampe to  
 giue others light, to immitate his ver-  
 tues, that the wholl monasterie began  
 euerie day more and more to flourish in  
 regulare obseruance, and in the opinion  
 of the world, to get a great name of  
 sanctitie.

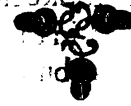
CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of his naturall gifts, and of his  
prudence, and mortification of  
his eyes.

**H**E was an elected vessell, beau-  
tified with all the iewells of  
vertues, and as his minde was  
replenished with supernaturall gifts, so  
his bodie wanted not its naturall graces.  
He was of a spare bodie, but comely,  
he had a graue and modest looke, his  
eyes were sparklinge, tokens of the fire  
of diuine loue, which was in his soule  
inuisible to the eye. There was not one  
member in that man, which was not  
subordinate to the rule of reason. His  
speech was meeke and humble, his con-  
uersation Angelicall. He had an excel-  
lent naturall witt, ioyned with a happy  
memorie: he had likewise a singular  
good iudgement (as appeared in his go-  
uernment) he was courageous in goinge  
through with busines which did tend to  
God Almightyes honour and the good  
of religion: he was gratefull to all, gi-  
uinge

uinge to euerie one their due respect: he  
was dexterous in his actions, modest in  
correctinge and a peace maker, recon-  
cilinge those who vpon any occasion,  
had bene aduers. In his sermons he was  
hott but mouinge: in hearinge of con-  
fessions he was a helper, a counsailler,  
and a comforter: in his ordinary speech  
he was not fawninge, nor bitinge, and  
his conuersation without any pertina-  
cie: and to cōclude all in a fewe wordes:  
he was a man of an other world, of  
whome we may iustly say as (a) ALEX-  
XANDER HALENSIS saied of S. (a) Antonie  
BONAVENTURE. That he was a Possennus in  
man, in whome Adam seemed not to haue sa ro appa-  
fined. He was a reformer, Prelate, Ma- ru de scripto-  
ster, and patterne of perfection, of the ribus Eccles.  
Seraphicall Order of our holy Father tom. 1. de D.  
S. FRANCIS, who through so many Romanens.  
Prouinces and remote Kingdomes,  
illustrated this sacred institution, as an  
other Apostle proclaimed by God Al-  
mighty for this happy end.



CHAP. III.

*Of his religious simplicitie, and  
mortification of his eies.*

**B**V T to descend to particulars, wherein his religious simplicitie was manifested. He was so absorbed in God almightie, that he minded nothinge of exteriour thinges. When he was a younge brother keepinge the keyes of the pauntrie, for the space of six months, there was in the pauntrie grapes and pomgranades, which lay so palpably, that none could choole but see thē, but he for that space neither sawe, nor smelt, much lesse touched them: beinge asked why he did not giue them vnto the brothers, he humbly answered, that he knewe of none that were there. An other time, liuinge fower yeares in an other cloister, he neuer tooke notice of a great tree which stood in the middest of the court, which was obuious to euery ones eie. Beinge a yeare in an other place, and asked what his cell was made of, he answered,

*of blessed Alcantara.*

swered, he knew not whether it was of stone, or brick, or vwood. And a chappell vvhich he frequented about others, yet he knewe neither situation, forme, or any ornament vvhich did belonge thervnto. He vvas vvont to say to blessed THERESIA his ghostly child, that he knewe neuer a brother in his monasterie, but only by his speech. Moreover he vvas so mortified in his eies, that vyhere soeuer he vvas, he knewe no difference in places, no distance of cells, and finally he vvas a dead man to all exteriour thinges. Neither vvas this mortification any stupiditie of nature, or vvant of senses, but his continuall busyng his thoughts vpō God almighty, a more noble, and higher obiect. Who could but thinke this chaste child of S. FRANCIS to haue made a covenant vvith his eies, not to behold a virgine? and vvell he might be stiled that sonne of a doue, vvwhose eies vvwere vvashed vvwith the milke of innocency. He kept such a continuall guard ouer his eies, that he neuer knewe any vvoman by her face. There vvas a certaine noble matron famous for her vertue, vvwho vvas vvont at PLACENTIA, some times to visite the holy Father, for his  
spi-

*The life*  
 spirituall counsell she meetinge him at  
 A B V L A , saluted him , and expressed  
 to him the difficulties of her state , he  
 modestly denied, that he euer sawe the  
 vvoman. Ifeuer he opened his eies, it  
 vvas in the quire , though he had so  
 good a memory , that he knevve most  
 part of the office vvithout booke. Be-  
 inge Superiour he did particularly cor-  
 rect this imperfection vvith seueritie.  
 Knowvinge, nothinge to be more preiu-  
 diciall to the soule , then to set open  
 those vvindowes, at vvich, doth enter  
 the greater part of sinne , that doth de-  
 file the heart of man.



CHAP.

of blessed Alcantara.

CHAP. IV.

*VVith vvhat austeritie and mor-  
 tification the holy Father  
 liued.*

**B**E CAUSE for the most part this  
 holy Father liued in solitarie  
 conuentes, most remote from  
 vvorldly tumoult, or rather heremita-  
 ges, all his rigourous penance , could  
 not be taken notice of by any. Neuer-  
 theles vve vvill sett downe some,  
 vvich he could not hide from those,  
 vvith vvhome he conuersed.

He did vvare for seauen yeares toge-  
 ther a haire shirt full of hard knotts,  
 S. THERESIA affirmeth that he  
 vvore it tventie yeares.

Besides plates of Iron , and other  
 things vvhervvith he tyranized euer his  
 tender flesh. His disciplines vvere so fre-  
 quent and bloodie , that he seemed ra-  
 ther the trunk of a tree then a humaine  
 bodie. He vvould neuer couer his head  
 although it rayned neuer so fast, or the  
 sun

*The life*

sun shined neuer so hott. His diet was so slender, and meane, that in his youth, and old age he did eate nothinge but browne bread, and the most mustie crusts that he could finde. If sometimes he recreated himselfe with a fewe boyled hearbes, he would not be so delicious as to eate them with oyle. Beinge superiour he caused as many beanes and pease to be boyled at once, as should serue the conuent for seauen dayes together, which austeritie his subiects most willingly embraced, beinge glad in some measure to immitate their cheife. But he seasoned his owne portion with ashes, or some vngratefull liquour, least his palate should take pleasure in his meate.

Mother THERESIA hath heard his companions say, that some times he liued eight dayes together without any meate or drinke, especially when with more violence, he addicted himselfe to deuotion. For he suffered in his prayers frequent raptures and extasies, of which (saith she) I am wittnesse. He neuer drinke wine, but water, though for the infirmitie of his stomach it was prescribed to him by the Phisitian: but he constantly refused it sayinge that nothinge was so

repu-

*of blessed Alcantara.*

repugnant to holy pouertie, and abstinence, as flesh and wine, the one beinge an enemy to chaſtitie, the other to contemplation, both which, as long as he liued, by Gods grace he would enjoy. I will sett downe for the satisfaction of the deuout reader the wordes of euer blessed THERESIA, the glorie and foundresse of the discalſed Carmelites, to whome he was some times ghostly Father, of whome she confessech to haue receiued much spirituall comfort; whose authoritie, by reason of her renowned sanctitie, and liuinge at the same time with him, is without controull. Her wordes be these. (a) God almightie bereaued vs of a man of admirable example, vwhen he tooke out of this life, Father PETER OF ALCANTARA, the vworld it seemeth could endure no longer so great perfection, they say that our health is not so good, that nowve those times be past, this holy man vvas of this time, he vvas satt in spirit, as those of other ages, he had also the vworld vnder his feete, for though vve doe not goe barefoote, nor doe such austere penance as he did, there are many thinges (as I haue saied else vvere) to treade dovyne the vworld vwith all. And our Lord teacheth them, vwhen he seeth such a minde, as he

(a) *Et vita*  
B. *Theresia*  
cap. 27.

c

gare

The life

gave in great measure to this holy man, which I speake of, to continue 47. yeares together in such austere penance, as all knowe. I will declare some part of it, for I knowe that it is all true. He told it to me and to another, from whence he concealed little, and the cause why he told it me, was the great love which he bare me, and which our Lord gave him to defende me, and encourage me, in the time of so great necessitie, as that was, which I have spoken of, and will declare further; it seemeth to me, that he told me, that he had slept no more but an houer and halfe betwixt day and night for the space of 40. yeares, and that this was the greatest difficultie he found in his penance at the beginninge, to overcome his sleepe, and for this cause he did alwayes. Either kneele or stand, and when he slept it was sittinge leaninge his head against a little peece of wwood, which he had driuen into the wall, he could not lye downe though he would, for his cell as is knowne, was no longer then fover foot and an halfe, in all these yeares he neuer did put on his capuce, how great sun-shine or raine soever it was, neither had he any thinge on his feet, nor other garment, but his habit of course cloth, without any other thinge next his skin, and this as straight as could be endured, and a short cloke  
of the

of blessed Alcantara.

of the same vpon it, he told me that when it was very cold he did putt it of, and opened the dore and little window of his cell, that afterward when he did putt his cloke on againe, and shutt his dore, he might giue some contentment and recreat his bodie, which before was frozen with cold: He did very ordinarily eate but once in three dayes; and he asked me at what I maruailed, for it was verie possible, for one that accustomed himselfe to it. His pouerty was extreame, and likewise his mortification in his youth, &c. With all his sanctitie he was verie affable, though he vsed not many wordes, if he were not spoken too, for then he was verie pleasinge, hauinge a good vnderstandinge. And a little after. His end was like his life preachinge and admonishinge his Fryars. When he sawe death drawe nigh, he said the Psalme: Lætatus sum in his quæ dicta sunt mihi; and kneelinge downe departed. Since our Lord hath let me enjoy him more then in his life, giuinge me aduise and counsell in many thinges I have seene him many times in exceedinge great glorie; the first time he appeared vnto me, he said: O happie penance which did merit such a reward! and many other thinges. A yeare before he died, he appeared to me beinge absent, and I knewe that he should dye, and I sent him word beinge some leagues  
c 2 from

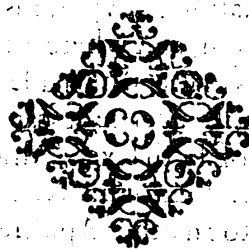
The life

from hence. When he gaue vp the ghost, he appeared to me and sayed, that he vvent to rest, I beleued it not, I told some of it, and eight dayes after the newes came that he vvas dead, or rather began to liue for euer. Behold here his austeritie endeth vwith so great glorie, he seemed to comfort me more nowe, then vwhen he vvas in this vworld. Our Lord told me once, that nothinge should be asked in his name, vvhich he vwould not heare. I haue scene many thinges fulfilled vvhich I haue desired him to aske of our Lord; he be blessed for euer. Amen. And in the 30. Chapter of her life she sayeth as followeth: Our Lord vouchsafed to remedy a great part of my trouble, and for that time the vvholl, by bringinge to this place the blessed Father PETER OF ALCANTARA, of vvhome I haue already made mention, and spoken somethinge of his penance, for amongst other thinges, I vvas certified, that for 20. yeares he had vvorne a cilice of plate continually. He is the authour of certaine little bookes of prayer, vvhich are now much vsed in the spanish tongue, for as one, that hath exercised it vvell he vvrote very profitably, giuinge most excellent rules to those, vvhich addict themselves to prayer. He obserued the first rule of S. FRANCIS vwith all rigour, and other thinges vvhich I haue related before. Thus she. And so much

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much shall suffice to speake of, but part of his rigorous penance, it was his feruent zeale, and loue of God, not strength of bodie, which made this crabbed way of penance ealy to his Holy Spirit: whose example may (though not in so great a measure as he did) iustly moue vs, to shake of that old and selfe-loue excuse of ours, in sayinge, our bodies are weake, when alas! our willes are frozen, and so nice, that we are afrased to expose our carcasse but to a poore trial; the heathen SENECA will check our indeuotion, who sayeth: (b) Not because certaine thinges are hard, therefore vve dare not doe them, but because vve dare not doe them, therefore they are hard.

(b) Non quia difficilia quaedam sunt, ideo non audemus, sed quia non audemus, ideo difficilia.





*The life*

CHAP. V.

*Of his great puritie, and humilitie.*

**T**HE man of God increasinge in his rigorous penance, did not only mortifie in part, but wholly subdued his passions, and made his senses subordinate to the rule of reason, he suffered nothinge to enter into his soule, which might separate, or in the least kinde withdrawe his affectiō from his beloued spouse, for (as much as was possible for pilgrime man) he enjoyed the spirit of God; golden peace and diuine consolation satt vpon his winges of contemplation, and where others make their bodies masters, he made his a slaue vnto his spirit. Hence it came to pass, that many of both sexe, drawne with the fragrant odour of his vertues, flocked to him, as to an other Apostle, to whose counsells and admonitions they obeyed, as to a diuine oracle.

Vpō a time the count ORAPSANE a deuout nobleman, came to visit him.  
And

*of blessed Alcantara.*

And fallinge into discourse, how much God almightie was moyed with the sins of the world, out of his zeale breaketh into these speeches. O Father! what doe you thinke? what will be come of this wicked world? doe you thinke the diuine iustice, can containe it selfe any longer from reuenge? behold howe vertue is opprested, and sin triumpheth? how wilfully doe we hoarde vp anger against the day of anger? to which the man of God modestly answered and sayed, noble Sir, doe not afflict your selfe, a remedy will easly be found to cure this disease, the point of the difficultie consisteth only in you and me, for the generall perdition of mankinde, floweth from this fountaine, that all and euery one dissemblinge or cloakinge their owne sins, accuse the wholl, when the wholl can not be said to sin at all, but particular persons in the wholl. Wherefore men crye out against the wickednesse of the word, that all are naught, and none that doe good, when if they would but looke into their owne particular, they should finde matter enough of sorrowe, and to moue them selues to doe penance for their owne faults: but nowe because they blame the  
c 4 wholl,

*The life*

wholl, they neglect their owne particulars, and iustifie themselues with a foolish presumption. Therefore, noble Sir, let your Lordship, and I mend one a peece, and then a great part of the world wilbe amended, we shall appease the angry iudge, and repaire a great part of the ruine of mankinde by our good example.

When CHARLES the fifth recollected himselfe in a certaine monasterie of the HIERONYMITES, vnderstandinge of the sanctitie and integrety of this holy Father, he sent for him, with an intent to make him his ghostly Father. But he hūbly refusinge so great an honour, alleaged some reasons, why he thought this employment not to be fittinge for him. At which deniall the Emperour beinge a little moued, with anger, saied, we charge you, Father, that you would take care of our soule. He seeinge this suddaine alteration of CESAR, fell downe at the feete of his maiestie, and earnestly desired him, to differre the busines to what day or houre he would please to appoint, that in the meane time he might cōmend it to God almighty; which the Emperour graunted, then he tooke his leaue of the Emperour,

*of blessed Alcantara.*

perour, and saied, this renoued CESAR, shalbe a signe vnto you, that it is not accordinge to God almighties will, which you haue desired, if I doe not retourne at the appointed time. Then passinge to his former solitude, as he went, he complained with many sighes and groanes, to God almightie, fearinge by the diuises of Sattan, to be drawne from the embrasinges of his beloued spouse CHRIST IESVS. He sent vp his feruēt prayers to the almightie throne, and saied these like wordes: Lord, I haue, not therfore left the world, and betoken my selfe to this holy desert, that, now at length my name should be renowned in a Princes court, and liue in honour, that am a poore FRANCISCAN FRYAR. Why should my cares be troubled with the flatteringes of courtiers, who came to speake my fault in religion? I confesse that this office may be exercised without sinne, but whether it be expedient for my soule, sweet IESVS, tell me? and when he entred into his cell, Lord, I beseech thee pull me not from hence, whether thy omnipotent hand hath brought me. Here I am safe, here I am rich; because I enioy thee who alone,

*The life*

alone canst satiate my soule. Alas! with-  
out thee what is the wholl empire?  
and with thee this poore cell, is a  
Kingdome of contēt. Here let me liue:  
Here let me die. Lord let it please thee,  
what I wish for, because all is thine,  
what soeuer I desire. If thou grantest,  
me my petition, let this be a signe vnto  
me, that C E S A R molesteth me no  
more. So risinge, as beinge heard, did  
appeare no more before him. Neither  
did the Emperour euer solícite him after,

The same request did the illustrious  
Princesse I O H A N N A, sister to P H I L -  
L I P the second, Catholique Kinge of  
*Spaine*, make vnto this holy Father,  
whome he likewise denied after the  
same manner. Thus whilest he fled hon-  
ours, he was most honoured of all, and  
reuerenced of euery one.

And what candide synceritie he vsed,  
in contemninge proffered honours,  
men of no small qualitie obserued, that  
those who honoured him, he would no  
more regard their speech then a simple  
ideot, and would labour to diuert them  
from that, to some other discourse. He  
had rather be called a sinner then a holy  
man, and he himselfe would (but with-  
out scandall) lay open to the world his  
im-

*of blessed Alcantara.*

imperfections, vnder vvhich, his vertues  
and graces vvere cloaked. But God the  
searcher of secrets, by howe much he  
did striue to hide them, the more he  
made his fame to shine in the world, to  
the astonishment of all. For he vvas a  
man vvhomē God had chofen accor-  
dinge to his ovvne heart, by vvhose in-  
dustrie, and from vvhose spirituall  
loines did springe, many great seruantes  
of I E S V S C H R I S T, and many re-  
nouvned martyrs of our holy Order.



CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of his seruant prayers and raptures,  
& of his spirit of prophesie.

**G**OD almightie was alwayes present with him, and he with God. His soule was like a fyerie fornace, made hott with the fuell of the crosse of CHRIST. It was not in his owne power, to containe himselfe, but what thing focuer he either sawe, or heard, which might delight his beloued IESVS, though it were but a farr of, his heart strings would begiune to treble, and his vitall spirits leaue him, and frequently fall into extasie. He was accustomed for a wholl houre together, to say his prayers with his armes stretched out in manner of a crosse, sightinge and weepinge, till at last he would be besides himselfe, eleuated from the ground, and vnited only to his God. He was oftentimes in this manner rapt, when he was in the quire at mattins. But his deuotion was much more augmēted at the aulter, when he celebrated the dreadfull sacrifice,

of blessed Alcantara.

fice, then would riuers of teares gush in abundance from his venerable eyes, that would moue the most stonie and obdurate heart of any of the standers by, vnto compunction. After masse he would withdrawe himselfe into his cell, where he hath beene often heard to haue had greuious conflicts with deuils: who oftentimes appearinge in a visible shape, would followe him vp and downe with a terrible furie.

In talkinge of God almightie, his soule would be presently inebriated with diuine sweetnes, and ascendinge by degrees from one word to an other, as, what was God incarnated for me? was God made man for me? was God vested with humane flesh for me? and the like. He would forthwith breake into exclamations, and hurryinge himselfe into his cell, would for the space of aboue three howers together, loose the vse of his senses. (a) One day, a brother, that was newly made Preist, practisinge in the garden to singe masse, when he heard him singe these wordes of S. Iohns gospell. (*Et Verbum caro factum est.*) He was eleuated into the aire two cubits high, and flew through fower doores with the violence of this motion, at length

(a) *Marianus in vita B. Alcant. cap. 10.*

*The life*

length settinge himselfe vpon his knees, before the blessed Sacrament for a longe space together remained in extasie.

This therfore vvas ordinarie to the freind of God, that vwhen he heard any thinge of the humanitie of our blessed Sauour, or any deuout vvord of the holy Scripture, it vvould cause him raptures. Neither could he help them, though he did striue much against them, especially in the presence of others, but his heart vvould become like meltinge vvax in the midst of his bovvells. He vvas often in seinge the Crucifix, moued vvith such compassion that his armes a crosse vvould be rapt, vvith little cloudes glittering about his heade.

He would some times prophesie, to some the losse of honours, to others sudden death, to other purgatorie. Which would fall out the verie day and hower he told them.

The first time he sawe S. THERESIA he told her what contradictions and afflictions she suffered from her ghostly Fathers, and other spirituall persons, who would needs perswade her, that she was seduced. And moreover, that she was to suffer much more, in the same kinde. He likewise  
for

*of blessed Alcantara.*

forteold what should be successe in the Indies.

CHAP. VII.

*Of his patience.*

**H**E traced the steps of our blessed Sauour, and all his glorious Saints, (a) all vvich did neuer merit their crownes vvithout carryinge of the crosse of CHRIST.

He vvas an other patient IOB, in sufferinge the temptatiōs and afflictions, the infirmitie of man is subiect vnto, he vvas in a particulare manner loadē vvith the heauie burthen of them, not vvithstandinge his seruant spirit, patiently supported, and vvictoriously triumphed ouer all his difficulties mauger all the force of Sathan. His frequent combates, his persecutions, his sicknes, his longe and tedious trauels, the difficulties he did vndergoe in erectinge his prouince, vvould take vp too much time to relate. He vvas so greedie of sufferinge, that he esteemed himselfe happie, to  
bare

(a) *Quis Sanctorum sine patientia coronatus? solus in deliciis Salomon fuit, & ideo fortasse corrui. Dino Hieron.*

*The life*

bare afflictions for the name of I E S V S,  
sayinge, that there vvas no vway so sure  
and easie to attaine vnto perfection, as  
the carryinge of the crose of C H R I S T.  
He vvould therfore begge of God al-  
mightie that he might neuer be vvith-  
out some affliction. Thus did our coura-  
gious champion trample vpon all his  
enemies. (b) He kicked the *Aspe* and  
*Basiliske*, he vvalked vpon the *Lion* and  
the *Draggon*, vvhist he vanguished all  
his foes, not so much by resistinge, as by  
sufferinge.

(b) *Psal.* 90.



CHAP.

*of blessed Alcantara.*

CHAP. VIII.

*Of his charitie towardes his  
neighbour.*

**H**I s charitie tovvardes his nei-  
bour vvas vnspeakable, for this  
cause he oftē visited hospitalls  
to serue the sick, assistinge them both  
spiritually and corporally, and often-  
times miraculously restoringe them to  
their former health. After he had made  
an end of his deuotions, the residue of  
his time he spent, in comfortinge the  
afflicted, in cherishing the feable, and fi-  
nally in any thinge he could imagine,  
might cōfort his neighbours, either cor-  
porally or spiritually, so that innumera-  
ble people of all conditions, and sexes  
continually flocked vnto him for his  
charitable assistance.



d

CHAP.

The life

CHAP. IX.

Of his pouertie.

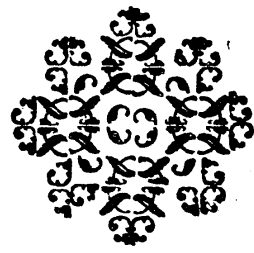
(a) S. Franciscus non solum paupertatis commodis libentissime fruebatur, sed etiam ita honorabat & colebat, quasi rem eximiam & cui nulla humana dignitas posset comparari. Itaque ut D. Bonau. scribit, eam in omni sermone modo Matrem, modo Sponsam, modo Dominam appellabat, saepe etiam Reginam, propterea quod in rege regum eiusque genitrice, adeo insigniter effulisset. Hieron. Platus de bono stat. relig. lib. 2. cap. 3.

HE vvas a rigid obseruer of holy pouertie, vvhich in imitation of his patron (a) S. FRANCIS, he not only loued, but honoured so farr that he vvas wont to call it the Euangelicall pearle, vvhervvith he enriched his nevv erected prouince, in that lustre as the obseruance vvas in the infancie of our Seraphicall Order, from vvhich time, and by vvhose example, most prouinces through the Christian vvorld haue excelled in this particulare point, as much as in their former splendour. He permitted his brethren to haue nothinge in their cells but of mere necessitie, and to the preachers he permitted them no more but two or three bookes, vvhith the Bible and a crucifix.

He vvas vpon a time asked by S. THERESIA vvhither or no she should found her Monasteries vvhith rentes and yearely reuenues, to vvhich diuerse

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diuerse persons of qualitie had aduised her. He answered, that it vvas an iniurie to God the authour of Euangelicall counsell, to aske the aduise of men touchinge the obseruance of them, or to doubt vvhither or no they vvcre obseruable. And vvhith all encouraged her to be constant in that seruant desire, she had begun in embracinge holy pouertie. To vvhose counsell she vvvillingly obeyed. And after our Lord appeared to her in prayer, and declared, that it vvas his vvill that her Monasteries should be founded in holy pouerty. His letter to her I thinke it not amisse to set dovvne at large, vvhich follovveth.



*The life*

*A letter of the blessed Father  
FR. PETER DE AL-  
CANTARA, to the holy  
Mother THERESA OF  
IESVS, who demanded his  
counsell, whither she should  
founde her Monasteries with  
rents or no.*

**T**HE holy Ghost giue you his  
grace and loue, &c. I receiued  
yours, deliuered me by DON  
GONZALES D'ARANDA. And am  
amazed, considering your zeale, and  
pietic: in committing to the direction  
of learned lavvyers, that vvhich is no  
vvayes their profession, or belonging  
vnto them: you should doe vvell to  
take their aduice concerning the deci-  
dinge of a processe or of sutes in lavv,  
and téporall affaires, but in that vvhich  
concerns perfection of life, vve ought  
to treat only vwith those vvhich practise  
the same. For such as the conscience of  
euery one is, such are his exercises and  
vvor-

*of blessed Alcantara.*

vvorkes. Concerninge the Euangelicall  
counsell, may I demand vvhether they  
be obseruable or noe? For that the coun-  
sell of God cannot be but good, nei-  
ther can the obseruance therof seeme  
difficult, vnlesse to those, vvhich gouerne  
themselues accordinge to humane pru-  
dence, hauinge les confidence in God  
then they ought. For he, vvhich hath  
giuen the counsell, vwill consequently  
giue force and meanes to accomplish  
the same. And if your zeale and feruour  
dravve you to embrace the counsell of  
CHRIST IESVS, obserue them  
vwith the greatest integritie, and perfe-  
ction that possible you can: seeinge they  
were equally giuen to both sexes. It can  
not be, but the same meritt and reward  
will be rendered vnto you, as to others  
that haue truly obserued them. And if  
there be seene any want or necessitie in  
the Monasteries of poore Religious  
Women, it is because they are poore  
against their wills, and not through  
faulte of their vowe of pouertie, or fol-  
lowinge of the Euangelicall counsell.  
For I accoumt not much of their sim-  
ple pouertie, but of their patient suffe-  
rance of the same for the loue of God.  
But I more esteeme of that pouertie  
d 3 which



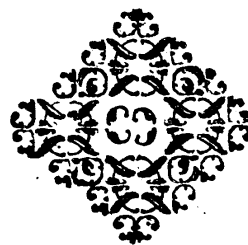
*The life*

which is desired, procured, and embraced for the same loue. And if I should thinke or otherwise determinatly beleue, I should not hould my selfe a good Catholique. I beleue in this, and in all other thinges taught by our blessed Sauour, and that his counsells are good and profitable, as proceedinge frō God, and though they oblige not to sinne, they binde neuertheless that man to be more perfect that followeth thē, then if he had not vndertaken them at all. I hold them poore in spirit, which are poore in will, as our Sauour hath saied, and my selfe proued; how be it I beleue more from God thē of myne owne experience, that those, who by the grace of God, are with all their hearts poore, leade a life mott happie as confidinge and hoping in him alone. His diuine Maiestie giue you light to vnderstand this truth, and to practise the same. Beleue not those that shall tell you the contrarie, for want of light and vnderstandinge, or for not hauinge tasted, how sweet our Lord is to those, that feare and loue him, renouncinge for his sake all vnnecessarie thinges of this world, for they are enemies of the Crosse of CHRIST, not beleeuinge the

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the glorie which accōpanieth the same. I also pray our Lord to giue you this light, that you be not wantinge in the beleife of this truth, so much manifested. And that you take not counsell, but of the followers of CHRIST IESVS. Although others thinke it sufficient if they obserue the thinges they are bound vnto, yet they haue not alwayes greater vertue and perfection by their worke. And though the counsell bee good, yet that of our blessed Sauour is much better. Who knowes what he counselleth and giueth grace to accomplish the same: and in the end reward to those who hope in him and not in rents and goods of the earth.

*From Auila this 14. of April 1562.*



The life

CHAP. X.

*Of his confidence in God almighties  
providence.*

**H**IS admirable confidence in God almighties providēce, did accompanie his rigid and Euāgelicall pouertie, and it oftentimes miraculously appeared both at home and abroad.

(a) *Marianus in eius vita. cap. 6.*

(b) *Ea est itineris ad eum ob loci solitudinem, atque viarū anfractibus difficultas, ut vix accolis atque assuetis pateat. Goufaga 3 parte Cbro. ord. S. Franc. in prou. sancti Iosephi.*

(A) He liued some times in the conuent of *Sancta Maria de Rosario*, which is situated in a woody place, by the riuer *Tentairis*, six Italian miles remote from any companie, at all times it was hard to come vnto by reason (b) the way is very steepe and crooked, neuertheles it was a place of great deuotiō, whether the inhabitāts of the country did much resort; but now by reason of a great snowe, the like was not seene in the memorie of man; the Monasterie was so inuironed on euery side, that the Fryars could not goe out to get their victualls, neither could any come to them to bringe prouision. They cried to heauen

*of blessed Alcantara.*

heauen to the Father of the poore, that beinge destitute of all humane aide, he only out of his infinite mercie would be pleased not to forsake them. The holy Father desired them to goe into the church, and settinge themselues vpon their knees, before the blessed Sacrament, to pray to God that he would put a remedy to their hard affliction. He with great confidēce animated his Brethren, sayinge: Be couragious, Brethren, God almightie will not be longe, he will come without delay. He had no sooner vttered these wordes, but an other most violent storme of snowe fell so fast, that frustrated their hopes of all humane assistance. But he that conteineth not his anger longe, did not delay to comfort his afflicted childeren. Behold! a little space after the storme was ouer, the porter heard the bell of the gate of the conuent to ringe, he went to open the dore, but espied no bodie, he returned back againe, thinking it to be the winde, that had stirred the bell, or that his fancie seemed to heare the noise when he heard it not; checkinge himselfe with foolishnes, that he could imagine, that it was possible for any to come to the conuēt in so deepe a snowe.

Whi-

*The life*

Whilſt he was thus diſcourſinge with himſelfe, it range againe ſo hard that all heard it, notwithſtandinge it was a great winde. Then retourninge againe to the gate, and openinge it, he found a basket filled full of newe white bread, he looked about to ſee if he could eſpy any body, but no creature appeared, for it was a deepe ſnowe, where the footinge of any perſon could not but appeare. He left the basket, and with ioy ran backe into the conuent, to carry the good newes vnto the Fryars; who would not beleue, vntill the holy Father, commaunded all the Brothers, to goe in manner of proceſſiō, to ſee what God almightie had done for his ſeruant: When they came, they found all true, as the porter had related to the. But their benefactor did no where viſibly appeare. They carried the baſket in, and after thankſgiuinge reſhewed themſelues, with the bread which the Father of heauen had miraculoſly beſtowed vpon them. Vpon which they liued many dayes, vntill the extremity of the ſeaſon, was paſt and that they could goe out to begg almes accordinge to their cuſtome.

(c) An

*of bleſſed Alcantara.*

(c) An other time trauailinge in the extremities of the heate of ſummer, vpon the mountaine vulgarly called *Siera Morena*, he, with his companion grewe ſo faint, for want of ſome thinge, to quench their thirſt, that they were ready to ſinke vnder the burthen of their tedious iourney. He ſaid vnto his companion: Brother, let vs betake our ſelues to prayer the only remedie, to incline the God of mercie to take compaſſion vpon our miſerie. Whilſt they were vpon their knees at their prayers, from a thicket came runninge out a mad bull, who made towards them amaine, they ſeeing themſelues in this great danger of their liues, betooke themſelues to flight, but the bull perſued them ouer hedge and ditch, hard at their heeles, till at laſt he forced them to a place, where was a fountaine of water, when they came in ſight of that, the bull forgettinge his former fury, ſtoode ſtill like an innocent lambe, he breathed himſelfe a while, and went an other way. But they admiringe this great miracle of the omnipotent, that ſendeth his wild beaſts to teach the poore, reſhewed themſelues and went on their iourney with alacrity, their ſoules more  
com-

*The life*

comforted with this v unexpected benefit of God almighties providence, then their bodies strengthened with the water which they drunk for their sustenance.

(d) *Marianus ibidem.*

(d) Hauinge occasion to goe from *De las Lucuas* to *Del Pico*: as he was in his iournie it began to snowe, which fell so fast that it was not possible for him to goe forward or backward, so that he was enforced to remaine the wholl night in that extremitie of cold and snowe. But the seruour of his deuotion, wherwith he implored the diuine assistance, caused him to pass ouer the night without tediousnes. But that which was more admirable. Behold! in the morninge when it was day, one might see, that the snowe did not so much as touch or wett him, but it congeled ouer his heade in a miraculouse maner like a canopie, and of each side too wales of snowe frozen in a curious manner, defended him from the iniurie of the weather, as though he had bene shutt in a beautifull chamber.

These fewe miracles I haue set downe collect out of many, which God almightie hath bene pleased to worke by the meanes of his glorious seruant.

(e) As

*of blessed Alcantara.*

(e) As testimonies, not only of many singular prerogatiues of graces exhibited to this holy Father in his owne particular. But also that we admire these straunge and vnaccustomed manner of God almighties proceedinges with this blessed man, the truth wherof beinge confirmed by many approued authours. May be incited to immitate his vertues whome God hath honowred with the grace of workinge miracles.

(e) *Miraculū*  
*voco quicquid*  
*arduum aut in-*  
*solitum supra*  
*spē vel facult-*  
*ta: ē miraculū*  
*apparet, qua-*  
*dam admira-*  
*tionē faciunt,*  
*quedam gra-*  
*tiam magnam*  
*benevolentia-*  
*que conciliat*  
*Aug. de vit.*  
*cred. prope fi-*  
*nem*

CHAP.

If thou shouldest obiect vvith Calvin *in prefat. instit.* that the miracles of our Sainctes in the Catholique Church, are partly fained, partly diabolicall. I ansvver, that the same thinge the Pharisies obiected to our blessed Sauour, that he cast out deuils in Beelzebub the prince of the deuils. More ouer it is most deuilish to blemish the integritie of the ancient Fathers and Sainctes, vvith such an impudent and foule aspercion, as those vvho vvrote the liues of other Sainctes, as Nycenus of Taumaturgus, S. Athanasius and S. Hierom, of S. Anthonie, Seuerus of S. Martine, S. Gregorie of S. Benet, S. Bernard of S. Malachias, S. Bonaventure of S. Francis. VVhose authoritie if vve should deny no faith or credit is to be giuen to any historie in the vvorld. VVhich absurditie none, but men out of their vvitts, or blinded vvith malice, vvill admitt S. Augustine confirmeth vvhat I say. His vvordes be these: *An dicēt aliquis ista falsa esse miracula, nec fuisse facta sed mendaciter scripta, quisquis hoc dicat, si de his rebus negat, omnino vllis literis esse credendū, potest etiā dicere nec Deos vllos curare mortalia. De ciuit. Dei l. 10. c. 18. Quedā facta non nisi à proteruentibus negari possunt, vt sunt miracula facta à Syluestro corā Constantino tam in curatione lepræ eius, quā in disputatione eius contra Iudeos: quæ facta tanquā celeberrima mundū non latuerant. Scot. in prol. q. 3. B. 11.*

CHAP. XI.

Of his knowledg in holy Scripture,  
and of his preachinge.

**H**E was so well verfed in the holy Scripture, that for the most part, he could repeate it without booke, and in explicatinge it, he was so cleare, and with all so mouinge that one might iudge his learninge, to be rather supernaturally infused in prayer, then naturally gotten, by the ordinarie meanes of studie (a) for he quickly learned what he was taught seeinge he had the holy Ghost for his master. He wrote some spirituall workes, wherein he had a speciall gift of God almightie, both to direct those who tend vnto perfection, in their iourney towardes heauen, as also to inflame their wills to aspire to that eternall good. In this particulare science, he was cheifly eminent and wrote profitable and learned tracts of this matter.

He

of blessed Alcantara.

He had such a rare gift in preaching: so inuocctiue against sinne, and withall so comfortable, to those who were pullinge their feete out of the snare of vices, that God almighty was pleased to worke by his meanes, many wonderfull effects in the soules of his auditory.

In the city of *Abula* there was a young gentleman, that was giuen vnto, and as it were buried in all the sportes and vanities of this wicked world. But especially in the vild and pernicious loue of wanton womē. Cominge in his pompe vpō a festiuall day of that place, by chauce mett the holy Father, who when he vnderstood of his corriualls the qualitic and sanctity of him, went towardes him with others to salute him with great respect, and withall begged his prayers, but God knoweth, with what intention, for he still obstinately remained in his filthy desires. But the holy Father in his sermon touched the soare of his soule vnto the quick (yet not reucaling any person) in so much, that the holy Ghost did so worke with him, that this prodigall child vnderstandinge the Father was to goe away from that place, the next day,

made

(a) O quam  
velox est ser-  
mo sapientie,  
& ubi Deus  
magister est,  
quam cito dis-  
citur quod do-  
cetur. B. L. 10  
fr 1. de Pe a-  
cto 16.

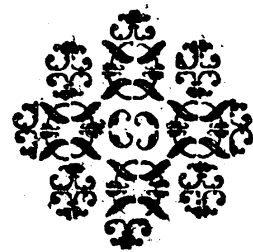
*The life*

made hast, to gett pen and inke to write his sins, the next day cometh to the Father, and saluteth him, giuinge him a longe (b) scroule of his sinfull life, and desireth him for the loue of God, that he would vouchsafe to pray for him, that God would haue mercie vpon his soule, and that he would not punish him for euer accordinge vnto his desertes. The holy Father receiued his prayer, and promised that he would pray for him. So each departed their way. But he had scarce turned his backe, but the Father earnestly begged of God almightie his conuersion, of which he was presently sensible: for before he came home, the spirit of God did so inflame him, that he abiured his former conuersation, and loathed the pleasures, that before he loued so much, and beinge returned to his house, flunge off his braue cloathes, toare his chaine from his neck, and vested himselfe in meane and country cloathes, without any shame appearinge so to all the world, all admiringe the suddaine change of the right hand of the highest; and as afterward he liued well, perseueringe to the end, so he dyed happily; he disperfed his patri-  
monie,

*of blessed Alcantara.*

monie amongst the poore, and built many monasteries and hospitalls, as testimonies of his conuersion.

He had such efficacy in his preachinge, that many common Women, drawne with the sweetnes of his spirit, changed their fordid and base manner of liuinge into holy and pious conuersation. Others as well of the nobility, as amongst the meaner sort of people, renouncing all pleasures for the loue of I E S V S, shrowded themselues in cloisters, where they might be secure from the contagion of worldly vanities. And many consecratinge their virginie to their celestially spouse, like lillies amongst thornes, perseuered in the open world amidst the dangers thereof, with immoueable constancie.



*The life*

CHAP. XII.

*Of his religious zeale and of  
his death.*

**T**HE Reverend esteeme of his vertues encreased so much, euen in his owne Cloister, that there many times (enioyned by obedience) performing the office of Guardian with great integrety, was at length by the suffrages of all the Fathers, elected twice Prouinciall of the prouinee of S. GABRIEL, where he mad a happy and notable reformation. But after his three yeares expired, he betooke himselfe againe to his poore heremitage, where he fatted his soule with sacred contemplation, perseueringe in readinge the ancient Fathers, watchinges, fastinges, and regulare discipline. But the more he hid himselfe in these obscure places, the more the fame of his learninge and sainctie did shine abroad. And in testimonie that God almightie would not haue this resplendat light, to be put vnder a bushell, but to be

*of blessed Alcantara.*

be set vpon a candlestick, to giue light to others, to followe his glorious footsteppes, and to the end, that he might not only enrich his owne soule with the treasures of vertue, but also instruct others, both by his doctrine and example, to aspire to heauen, the sea Apostolique did vouchsafe to honoure him with a commission, by vertue of which, he should erect, and foude a newe prouince vnder the title of S. IOSEPH. Which before his death, he was so happy to see, not only multiplied in number of conuentes, and religious men (by his great labour and trauaile) but also to be perfectly established in regulare obseruance, and true monasticall discipline.

At last, the number of his meritts beinge compleat, his iust master, whom he had serued so longe with great fidelitie, was pleased to call him, to reward his labours with an eternall crowne of glorie, and to reape in ioy what he had sowed in teares. He fell sick in the Conuent of S. ANDREVE DE MONTE ARENO, where God almightie vouchsafed to let him knowe the hower of his death. And before his departure he called his bretheren, exhortinge

The life

tinge them to perseuerance in that happie course, which they had vnderaken for the loue of God, and the sauing of their owne soules. He thē receiued vpon his knees with aboundance of teares the sacred *Viaticum* with singulare deuotion, and a little after, his infirmitie increasinge, he receiued also the Sacrament of extreame Vnction. The blessed Virgin and S. I O H N (to whome all his life time he was verie much deuout) appeared to him, and gaue him assurance of his saluation. Which euer-comfortable newes, he no sooner vnderstood, but his heart was rauished with ioy, and his mouth filled with gladnes, and out of that aboundance of content breaketh out into these wordes of the Prophet

(a) *Psal. 112.*

DAVID: (a) *Letatus sum in his quæ dicta sunt mihi: in domum Domini ibimus: I haue reioyced in those thinges that are saied vnto me: we will goe into the house of our Lord. In fine the happie hower beinge come, he yealded his blessed soule into the handes of his maker, and by the passage of a temporall death, trauailed to an eternall life the 18. of October, vpon the feast of S. L V K E 1562. the 63. yeare of his age, and the 47. of his entrance into holy Religion.*

His

of blessed Alcantara.

His body after his death became more beautifull, shininge with great claritie, and sendinge fourth sweete odours. The people from all partes flocked to behold this sacred spectacle, and greedie after so rich a prey, clipped peeces of his habite, which they conserued as holy reliques. His bodie was no sooner in the graue, but his sepulchre began to be renowned with many (b) miracles which for breuity sake I omitt to speake of because I would not be too tedious to the deuout reader.

(b) *Cum pu- rulus Æthiops inutulis peni- tæ asque con- tractus ad il- lius sepulcrū ab eius hera- vxore quan- dam Martini de Friars ac præfati oppidi Artenarum accola, addu- ctus esset eius meritis Deo opt. max. id*

*opere integre sospitati restituitur. Et Leonora Gonfalua eiusdem oppidi inquilina à paralisi qua grauissimè laborabat ad eius quoque sepul- crum liberatur. Franc. Gonzaga 3. parte Chron. ordinis Syracchici: Vide plura apud Ioannem de sancta Maria in vita B. Alcant. c. 30.*

(c) His soule was no sooner out of his body, but presently he appeared to S. TERESIA, to bringe vnto her the ioyfull tidinges of his receiuinge into heauen. Many times after he appeared to her, and once amongst the rest he saied vnto her: O HAPPY PENANCE THAT (d) DESERVED SVCH A GLO- RIOUS RECOMPENCE!

(c) *In eius vita cap. 270*  
(d) *Opera no- stra nō habent bonitatē me- ritoria gloriæ ex sua natu- ra, nec à nobis sed à Deo.*

For our vorkes are to be takenin, at too- feld respect. 1. As they are in ther proper nature & dignity. 2. As they have Gods promise & acceptance. If vve consider them in the first sence, so they doe not merite, saluation: if in the secōd, they doe, This I say, to ansvvere the obiection



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of ignorant (e) Happie indeede was his penance, that  
 protestan- chaüged sorrowes into pleasures: mour-  
 tes, vvho ning into mirth: teares into ioyes, and  
 might take a momentarie crosse into an eternall  
 occasion to carpe at this vvord  
 (deserued) S I A (as we haue said before) affirmed,  
 and vvho that she receiued more comfort, and  
 likvvife consolation from him after his death,  
 thinke that then in time of his life. And that his  
 vve so dig- soule flewe immediately to heauen,  
 gnifie our without any passage by purgatorie. All  
 vvorkes these thinges beinge well examined,  
 that therby and verified, by persons, without all  
 vve thinke to merite exceptio, worthy of credit, his holines,  
 heauen, ab- for the glorie of God, honour of the  
 stractinge from the Saint, and benefit of the faithfull,  
 merites of our blessed vouchsafed to pronouce him beatified:  
 Sauours to the end, that as he had a perfect  
 passion fruition of glorie, in the Church trium-  
 vvhen it is phant, so he should want no praise or  
 certaine, our reuerence, in the Church militant. He  
 doctrine is, that the was  
 cheifest reason of merite is founded in Gods promise, not  
 mans vvorke, and our vvorkes, so to merite, and to be  
 ennobled, cheifly by vertue of ther principall agent our  
 blessed Sauours passion. *Conradus Klingius de locis com l. I.  
 c. 35. Stapelton. controuers. l. 10. c. 12. Bellarm. l. 1. de iustificat.  
 c. 21. & l. 5. c. 11 cum comuni Doctorum.* (e) If the conuersion  
 of sinners, and of greuious sinners, be so pleasinge to al-  
 mighty God, that the Angels of heauen doe reioyce at it  
 accordinge to S. Bernard *Supernas beatorum mansiones at-  
 tingit penitentia odor (ita vt teste ipsa veritate) magnum gaudium  
 fit inter Angelos Dei super vno peccatore penitentiam agente?*

*of blessed Alcantara.*

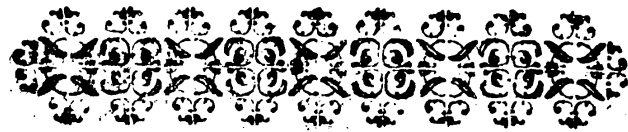
was beatified the 18. of April 1622. and *gaudens peni-*  
 his office is celebrated in the Conuentes *tentes, publi-*  
 of his order the 19. of October. *lanimes con-*  
*fortamini: vobis dico quod*  
*nuper conuersos de seculo,*  
*& a vijs vestrjs prauis*  
*recedentes, ex-*

F I N I S.

*cepit mox amaritudo animi penitentis. Ac velut recentium adhuc  
 vulnerum dolor nimius excruciat ac perturbat. Secura manus ve-*  
*stra distillant myrrha amaritudinem in salubrem hanc vultu-*  
*nem, quia cor contritum, & humiliatum Deus non despiciet.*  
 D. Bernard. *super Cantica serm. 10.* I say if such a conuer-  
 sion be so pleasinge to God, hove glorious may vve  
 iudge this holy Fathers penance to be, vvho from his  
 cradle to his graue, liued innocently and austerly? so  
 that vve may iustly say of him as the Church of S. Iohn,  
*Antra deserti teneris sub annis, cinium turmas fugiens potissi, ne  
 leui saltem maculare vitam, fame posses.*

B E N E D I C T V S D E V S.

BEA-



# BEATIFICATIO

B. P.

## DE ALCANTARA.

Gregorius Papa XV. ad perpetuam rei  
memoriam.

**I**N Sede Principis Apostolorum nullis licet nostris sus-  
fragantibus meritis à Domino constituti, pijs fidelium  
viris, quibus virtutum Dominus in seruis suis hono-  
rificatur, libenter annuimus, eaque fauoribus profe-  
quimur apparatus. Cum itaque instantibus non solum clare me-  
morie Philippo III. & charissimo in Christo filio nostro Philippo  
IV. Hispaniarum Regibus Catholicis, sed etiam ferè omnibus  
Hispanie regnis, venerabiles fratres nostri S. R. E. Cardinales sa-  
cris ritibus præpositi, de mandato nostro causam serui Dei Petri  
de Alcantara, Ordinis Min. strictioris obseruantia Discalceato-  
rum nuncupatorum, ac Prouincia S. Iosephi eiusdem Ordinis Fun-  
datorum, iuxta seriem trium causarum Palatii Apostolici Audito-  
rum ad effectum canonizationis examinauerint, ac multis desuper  
habitis sessionibus, referente dilecto filio nostro Marco Antonio,  
tituli S. Eusebii Presbyteri Cardinale Gozzadino nuncupato, ple-  
nissime constare de validitate processuum, fama sanctitatis, fide,  
pauitate, ceterisque virtutibus non in genere solum, sed etiam in  
specie, reliquiariarum ac sepulchri veneratione, plurimisque tan-  
dem miraculis pronunciauerint, censuerintque posse nos quando-  
cumque voluerimus, eandem Dei seruum, iuxta Catholice Ec-  
clesie ritum, sanctum, atque in cælis regnantem declarare, om-  
nibusque fidelibus solempni canonizatione proponere venerandū.  
Prædictus vero Philippus IV. Rex, & dilecti filij Minister Ge-  
neralis, & Fratres Ordinis prædicti nobis humiliter supplicari  
fecerint,

fecerint, vt donec ad canonizationem dicti Petri deueniatur,  
idem Petrus Beatus nuncupari ac de eo tanquam de Confessore non  
Pontifice Missam ac officium vt infra celebrari & recitari respecti-  
ue possint, indulgere de benignitate Apostolica dignemur. Nos  
supplicationibus huiusmodi inclinati de eorundem Cardinalium  
consilio, vt idem Dei seruus Petrus de Alcantara in posterum  
Beatus nuncupari atque de eo tanquam de Confessore non Pontifi-  
ce die 19. Octob. qua ipsius obitus memoria celebrabitur vbique  
terrarum ab vniuersa religione Minorum obseruantium vtrius-  
que sexus respectiue Missam celebrari atque officium recitari pos-  
sint. In oppido verò de Alcantara illius diocesis vbi natus at-  
que in altero de Arenas Abslensis diocesis vbi corpus eiusdem  
requiescere accepimus, omnibus tam regularibus quam seculari-  
bus Clericis sub ritu tamen semiduplici idem omnino liceat. Ac  
demum in Prouincia prædicta S. Iosephi, cuius autor extitit, ab  
ipsis dicti Ordinis Discalceatorum fratribus, etiam cum octava  
veluti de Patrono, officium pariter ac Missa iuxta Breuarij ac  
Missalis Romani Rubricas celebrari possint, Apostolica auctorita-  
te tenore presentiam perpetuo concedimus & indulgemus. Nos  
obstantibus constitutionibus & ordinationibus Apostolicis, ce-  
terisque contrarijs quibuscunque. Volumus autem vt presentium  
transumptis etiam impressis manu alicuius Notarij Publici sub-  
scriptis, & sigillo persone indignitate Ecclesiastica constituta  
munitis eadē prorsus fides adhibeatur quæ presentibus adhibere-  
tur si forent exhibiti vel ostensa. Datum Rome apud S. Petrum  
sub annulo Piscatoris die 18. Aprilis 1622. Pontificatus nostri  
anno secundo.

Copia vera desumpta ex tomo 4. Bullarj  
Laertij Cherubini impresso Romæ  
an. 1631.

FA-

F A C V L T A S  
S V P E R I O R I S .

**L**ibrum verè piùm Meditationum  
B. PETRI DE ALCANTARA,  
Ordinis Fratr. Min. in linguam Angli-  
canam à religioso Patre Fr. *Ægidio Villoughby*,  
eiusdem Ordinis Prouinciæ no-  
stræ Angl. filio, fideliter translatum, per  
omnia concordantem exemplari Latino  
inuenèrunt RR. PP. Theologi, qui-  
bus à nobis commissa fuit eiusdem exa-  
minatio, ideoque prælo dignum censui,  
ad instructionem populi Christiani, qui  
in tot controuersijs fidei, his pijs maio-  
rum nostrorum exercitijs penè destitui-  
tur. Habet insuper adiunctam vitam ip-  
sius B. PETRI è varijs authoribus à  
prædicto Patre *Ægidio* collectam, de qua  
idem sit iudicium. Dat. in nostra resi-  
dentia Londini 1. Aprilis 1632.

Fr. IOANNES GENINGES,  
*Minister Prouincialis.*

APPROBATIO.

**M**editationes hæ B. PE-  
TRI DE ALCAN-  
TARA, in linguam Anglica-  
nã à Religioso Patre Fr. *Ægi-  
dio Villoughby*, Ordinis Mi-  
norũ S. FRANCISCI tran-  
slatæ, vti & vita dicti B. Patris  
ab eodem auctore ex proba-  
tis auctoribus collecta, lucem  
videre merentur. Actum hac  
10. Aprilis 1632.

HENRICVS CALENVS,  
*S. Theol. Licent. Archipr.  
Brux. Librorum Censor.*



A  
**GOLDEN TREATISE,**  
 O F  
**MENTAL PRAIER.**

*Composed by the Reuerend & holy Father*  
**FR. PETER DE ALCANTARA,**  
*of the Seraphicall Order of*  
**S. Francis.**

**CHAP. I.**

**I**N this Chapter wee will briefly sett downe the fruite of prayer and meditation, that men considering the benefit of them, may be incited with a prompte and more willing mind to frequent these holy exercises.

It is most certaine, that the malice of our owne heartes, is the principall cause that hindreth vs from attaining to our beatitude

A and

**ERRATA.**

Pag.	Line.	Faults.	Corrected.
9	3	teaceth	teacheth.
11	2	iuspurations	inspirations.
15	17	hart	art.
30	7	tumpett	trumpett.
30	24	at housand	a thousand.
32	6	theadninges	threatninges
32	30	incuruimine	incuruimini.
43	17	vvortly	vvorthy.
49	11	cribares	cribraret.
80	20	meditatig	meditatinge.
81	9	ony	my.
81	11	crucifieth	crucifie.
85	10	transgression	transgressions.
131	21	the	then.
134	20	medition	meditation.
135	15	discoufe	discourse.
137	19	turret	turret.
141	6	often felt	often is felt.
150	25	raetes	actes.

2 *Bl. Alcantara,*  
and euerlasting happines, because it maketh vs slowe to godly actions, dull to vertuous exercises, and suggesteth a greater difficultie in them then there is, which if it were not, a man might vvalke vvithout any molestation in the way of vertue, and at length vvithout labour attaine to his desired end. Hence it is, that the Apostle sayth: *I delight in the layve of God according to the inward man: but I see another layve in my members repugnant to the layve of my mind, and captiuatenge mee in the layve of sinne.*

ROM. 7.

*The efficacie of deuotion.*

This therefore is the prime roote and cause of all our miseries, against which there is no remedie more conuenient, and efficacious, then deuotion, which according to S. THOMAS, is nothing else, but a certaine promptitude and facilitie of the minde to doe well. It doth exclude from our minde this tedious difficultie, and maketh vs with alacritie applie our selves to vertuous actes. Therefore not without cause wee may tearme it spiritual food, recreatiue and heavenly deawe, a pleasant instinct and supernatural affection of the holy Ghost, which doth so roborate and transforme the hartes of men, that it doth begett in them a new gust and fealing of spiritual thinges, and on the contrary a tedious loathing of worldly vanities.

Day.

*of Meditations*

3  
Daylye experience manifesteth this particular vnto vs. For wee see the soules of those who arise from profound and deuout prayer, to bee Strengthened with admirable resolutions, adorned with newe graces, and replenished with firme purposes of amendment of life, and frequenting pious exercises, they burne with an ardent desire of seruing and louing him with their wholl heart, whom in their prayer they found the God of all goodnes and benignitye, desiring to suffer any grieuous and burdensome crosse whatsoever it bee, yea to sheadd their blood for his sake. To conclude, prayer is a bath, an open place, a bedde of pleasure, wherein the soule re-createth and refresheth her selfe.

If you aske mee, what bee the chiefest *By vvhats meanes deuotion is gotten.* meanes to attaine vnto this heroicall vertue of deuotion. I answere with the same Doctour, that it is gotten by serious meditation and contemplation of heauenlye thinges. For the ruminating of these in the soule, with a more attentiu and profound consideration, doth begett in the will that disposition which wee call deuotiō, which effectually rouzeth and pricketh a man forward to euery good worke. For this cause the exercise of prayer and meditation was frequent and familiar to men of

A 2

lan-

4 *Bl. ACANTARA.*  
sanctity, as iudging it the easiest meanes to  
cōpasse deuotiō, which although it be but  
one only simple vertue, yet it disposeth  
and maketh vs fit for all others, and as it  
were with spurres pricketh vs forward to  
the performance of euery good worke.

*Bona. in  
the Med.  
of the life  
of Christ  
cap. 73.*

I call S. BONAVENTURE to witness what  
I say: his wordes are these. The inestima-  
ble vertue of prayer is able to obtaine all  
good, and remoue all hurtfull things. If  
thou wilt patiently endure aduersity; bee a  
man of prayer: If thou wilt ouercome tri-  
bulatiō and temptatiōs, bee a mā of prayer:  
If thou wilt trāple vpō thy peruerse inclina-  
tiōs, bee a mā of prayer: If thou wilt knowe  
the deceiptes of Sathan, and auoid thē; bee  
a mā of prayer. If thou wilt liue ioyfully in  
the worke of God, and trace the way of  
labour and affliction; bee a mā of prayer. If  
thou wilt exercise thy selfe in a spiritual  
course, and not walke acording to the de-  
sires of the flesh; bee a man of prayer. If  
thou wilt put to flight thy vaine and trif-  
ling fancies; bee a man of prayer. If thou  
wilt satt thy soule with holy thoughtes,  
good desires, seruour, and deuotion; bee a  
man of prayer. If thou wilt establish thy  
heart with a manly Spirit, and constāt pur-  
pose in the seruice of God; bee a man of  
prayer. To conclude, if thou wilt roote  
out

*of Meditation.*

5  
out vice, and bee indued with vertues; bee  
a man of prayer. In it is receaued the Vn-  
ctiō of the holy Ghost, which teaceth all  
thinges. Also if thou wilt clime vp to the  
toppe of contemplation, and enioye the  
sweet embracings of thy beloued spouse;  
bee a man of prayer. For by the exercise  
of prayer, wee come to that contemplation  
and taste of heauenly thinges. Thou seest,  
of what great power and vertue, prayer is.  
For the Confirmation of all which, omit-  
ting the Testimonie of holy Scriptures, let  
this bee an euident prooffe vnto the, that  
by dayly experience, wee heare and see il-  
literate and simple persons, to haue attained  
the foresayd and greater thinges by the  
vertue of prayer. Thus S. BONAVENTURE.

I beceech you, can there bee found a  
richer treasure or a more fertile felde de-  
sired? Heare an other Doctour no lesse  
for Religion and sanctitye, who vpon the  
same matter sayth: By prayer the soule is  
cleansed from sinne, replenished with cha-  
rity, confirmed in fayth, roborated in,  
and refreshed in Spirit. Prayer establis-  
heth the inward man, pacieth the heart,  
knoweth the trueth, conquereth tempta-  
tions, expelleth sorrowe, reneweth the  
fences, stirreth vp languishing vertue, put-  
teth to flight tepidity, and skoureth the

6 *Bl. Alcantara,*  
rust of vices. In prayer the quicke sparkles  
of celestial desires are incessantly sent forth  
from the burning coales of diuine loue.  
The priuiledges of prayer are rare, the pre-  
rogatiues admirable. Prayer vnlocketh the  
gates of Heauen, manifesteth diuine secrets  
and alwaies findeth free accessse to the ea-  
res of God. I will adde no more, for those  
things which haue alreadie bene sayd,  
abundantly expresse the frutes of this  
holy exercise.

## CHAP. II.

### *Of the matter of prayer.*

**H**A V I N G E takē notice of the vti-  
lity of prayer and meditation, wee  
will nowe declare the matter  
about which meditation is to bee conuer-  
sant: for seeing it is ordained to this end,  
that the soule of him that meditateth, may  
bee excited to the feare and loue of God,  
and the keeping of his commaundemen-  
tes: the matter of meditation ought to bee  
such, as doth next dispose to this end and  
scope. And although euery creature, and  
the whole Scripture it selfe bee able to mi-  
nister

### *of Meditation.*

7  
nister this matter vnto vs, yet speaking ge-  
nerally, the misteries of our holy fayth,  
contained in the *Creed*, are most efficacious  
and profitable to attaine vnto this end. For  
these on the one side, cōtaine God Almightyes  
benefittes, the later iudgement, the paines  
of hell, and the glorie of Paradise; all  
which, like sharpe prickes doe spurre vs  
on to the loue and feare of God: On the  
other side, they comprehend the life and  
Passion of our Lord and Sauour, which is  
the springe and fountaine of all our good.  
These two things contained in the Apo-  
stolicall *Creed*, for the most part yeilde  
matter of meditatiō, and therefore I thinke  
prayer and meditation ought chiefly to be  
conuerlant about the, although euery one  
in particular may haue certaine pointes,  
which may more specially inflame and ex-  
cite the soule to the loue and feare of God.

Being therefore perswaded with this  
reason, that I might the better conduct  
younge beginners, and vntrained soldiars  
into this way of mentall prayer, and that I  
might giue vnto them altogether prepa-  
red, and (as it were to litle children) fore-  
chowed matter of meditation, I haue sele-  
cted two kindes of meditatiōs, almost takē  
out of the misteries of our faith, the one  
seruing for the morning, the other for the

8 *Bl. Alcantara,*  
eueing: that as the body is comonly fedd  
with two meales; soe the soule may be  
strenthened and nourished with two spi-  
ritual refections, by the meditation and  
consideration of heauenly things. Some  
of these are of the Passion and Resurre-  
ction of our Lord IESVS CHRIST, others  
of the misteries of our fayth, as I sayd befo-  
re; But those who can not haue the oppor-  
tunity, to meditate twice a day, after this  
manner, they may vse them, to wit; they  
may take to their consideration the 7. for-  
mer Meditations in the one weeke, and  
the latter in an other weeke; or they may  
chiefly insist vpon those of the life and  
Passion of our Sauour: although the other  
be not to be neglected, especially in the be-  
ginning of a soules conuersion, to whom  
they are proper, when the feare of God,  
contrition and horroure of sinne, is chiefly  
to be regarded and sought after.



Here

of Meditation.

9

Here follove the 7. former Me-  
ditations.

*A Meditation for Munday.*

**T**His day thou shalt call to memory  
thy sinnes, and shalt exercise thy selfe  
in the knowledge of thy selfe, that on the  
one side, thou maiest truly ponder the  
greatnesse of thy offences, and on the other  
side, thou maiest looke into thy basenes,  
and thy owne nothing, and acknowledge  
that all the good which thou hast, is from  
God. This consideration will gett thee  
submission of mind, and true humility the  
mother of all vertues.

First therefore waigh with thy selfe, the  
multitude of the sinnes of thy former life,  
and namely those sinnes which thou hast  
comitted whē as yet thou wert not illumi-  
nated with the diuine splendour to know  
God Almighty rightly. These if thou dost  
examine with exquisite diligence, thou  
wilt finde to bee so many in number, that  
they will exceede the haire of thy head:  
for in this time thou ledest the life of a  
heathen, ignorant of the diuine powre, and  
as it were without any knowledge of his  
sacred Deity.

Then



Then consider how thou hast behaued thy selfe about the ténne commaundeméts and the 7. deadly finnes, and thou wilt finde, that there is no precept of Almighty God, which thou hast not violated, nor any mortal sinne, into which thou hast not fallen, eyther in thought, word, or deed. After that, call to minde God Almightyes benefittes, which he hath bestowed vpon thee in the whole course of thy former life, and see whether thou canst giue a good accompte of them or no.

Tell mee I pray the, how thou hast consumed the dayes of thy infancy, thy youth and the flower of thy manly age? how hast thou employed thy 5. exterior senses, and inward faculties of thy soule, giuen vnto thee by God, only to bee busied about his holy seruice, and the contemplation of heavenly thinges, what hast thou turned thine eyes vnto, but to beholde vanities? what haue thine eares listned after but lies and tales? what hath thy tongue vttered but mnrminges, and blasphemous speeches? what hath thy tast and feeling bene delighted in, but wanton pleasures? how hast thou vsed the remedy of the holy Sacramentes, giuen vnto thee, as a singular gift? what thanksgiuing hast thou restored for soe many benefittes which he hath  
hea-

heaped vpon thee? what alacitty hast thou vsed to satisfie his holy iuspirations? how hast thou spent thy health of body and naturall forces? how hast thou dispensed thy goodes of fortune? what good vse hast thou made of the commodity, and preferred occasions to liue well? what care hast thou had of thy neighbours welfare? what workes of mercye, or of bountye, hast thou done vnto them? what wilt thou answer in that terrible daye of iudgement, when thou must render a seuerer accompte of all these thinges! o withered tree destinated to eternal flames, except thou doest penance! what excuse wilt thou then frame, when thou must giue an accompte of euery yeare, of euerye month, of euery weeke, of euerye daye, of euery moment?

Thirdly consider, those finnes, which thou hast euery day committed, after God Almighty hath illuminated and opened the eyes of thy soule to meditate vpon heavenly thinges: and thou shalt finde that the old *Adam* hath yet borne a great sway in thy actions, and that sinfull roote to haue procreated in the, many and peruerse habits.

Diligently ponder, how vngratefull thou hast bene to God Almighty, how vn-

mind-

mindfull of his benefites, how contrary thou hast behaued thy selfe against his holy inspirations, how slouthfull and remisse in his diuine seruice: in which thou scarce hast euer vsed due alacrity and diligence, or such purity of intention as it is requisite, nay hast thou not serued God for worldly respects and commodity?

Enter into consideration how rigid thou art to thy neighbour, and how indulgent to thy selfe? how thou louest thy owne will, how thou adhearst to thy sensuality, how chary of thy honour, and of euery thing that belongeth vnto thee. Waigh well with thy selfe, how euery day thou growest more arrogant, more ambitious, more vaine, more prone to anger, more desperatly bent to malice, more prone to delights and pleasures, more mutable, more vnconstant, more propense to carnal finnes, and a greater louer of earthly vanities. Consider thy inconstancy in good, thy indiscretion in wordes, imprudence in deedes, in heigh and difficult matters pusillanimity sometimes, and often audacious temerity.

In the fourth place, after thou hast take notice of the number and order of thy finnes, pause vpon them a while in thy minde, and waigh euery one in the ballance of due

due consideration, that thou maiest perceau with what misery thou art on euery side enuironed. Which that thou maiest the better doe; consider these three circumstances in the finnes of thy former life. First against whom thou hast sinned. 2. Why thou hast sinned. 3. How thou hast sinned. Which if thou doest diligently penetrate, thou wilt finde that thou hast offended God, whose maiestie and goodnes is immense, who hath obliged man vnto him with so many benefites, as there are sandes in the sea, or drops of water in the Ocean.

Why hast thou sinned, or what violent occasiō hath enforced thee to any cryme? a litle momentary pride: a foule representation of pleasure; some smale commoditye placed in thy sight, and oftentimes, no occasion at all, but euil custome, and mere contempt of God.

But alas how hast thou sinned? with such facility, with such notable audacity, with so litle feare and conscience, yea with such security and pleasure, as though thou hadest to doe with no other then a wooden God, who regardeth not these sublu- nary thinges, neyther vnderstandeth or seeth any thing, what is done vpon the face of the earth. Is this the honour due vnto his supreme maiesty? is this a remunera- tion

tion of his benefites? dost thou with such seruices requite his whippings, his buffetings, and pretious bloud sheadd vpon the Crosse for thy sake? o wicked wretch that hast offended so great a maisty, more miserable, that for so sleight a cause, and most deplorable, that thou art not sensible of thy vtter Ruine; that after sinne thou fearest not damnation, and so neglectest to doe penance.

Moreouer it is very profitable, to insist a while vpon this consideration, and that thou esteeme thy selfe nothing, and certenly perswade thy selfe that thou hast nothing of thy selfe but sinne; all other thinges to be the gistes of God Almightyes bountie. For it is most eident, that all our good, both of grace and nature doth flowe from him: for he is the Author of the grace of predestination (which is the fountaine and originall of all others) of the grace of our vocation, of concomitant and persevering grace, and of the grace of euerlasting life. What hast thou then, that thou canst boast of, but sinne? only this nothing thou canst attribute to thy selfe, all other things belong to God: Whence thou maiest clearly and manifestly perceave what he is, and what thou art, and hence coniecture, what diffidence thou oughtest to haue

haue in thy selfe, and what confidence in God; to loue him, and to glorifie thy selfe in him, and not in thy selfe, but so farr as his grace doth freely operate in thee.

These thinges being digested with attentue meditation, as much as thou canst, vrge thy selfe, to a contempt of thy selfe: imagine that thou art like an emptie reede shaken with euery blast of wind, without grauity, without vertue, without constancy, without stability, and finally without any thing. Thinke thy selfe to bee a *Lazarus* foure dayes dead, a stincking and abominable carcasse, swarming with vermin, so filthy that passers by are forced to stoppe their nostrils, least they smel such a nastye sauour. Beleeue me, thou hart more abominable, before God and his holy Sainctes. Thinke thy selfe vnworthy to lifte vp thine eyes to Heauen; to tread vpon the earth, or that the creatures should serue thee; yea not worthy to eat bread or breath in the aire. Cast thy selfe with the sinfull woman in the Ghospel, at our Blessed Saviours feete: presenting thy selfe vnto him with a cofused and blushing countenance, no otherwise the the womā take in adultery before her husband, and with inward sorrowe, and true compunction, begg pardon of thy sinnes: that for his infinite

16 *Bl. Alcantara,*  
mercy and goodnes, he would vouchsafe  
to receiue thee againe into his fauour, and  
that thou maiest dwell in his howse for  
euer.

*A Meditation for Tvesd. ye.*

**T**His day thou shalt meditate vpon the  
miseries of the life of man, out of  
which consideration, thou wilt take notice  
of worldly vanities, and learne how much  
the glorie of them ought to be despised,  
seeing they are built vpon so weake a founda-  
tion, as our fading life, whose miseries,  
because they be innumerable, thou shalt  
take but seauen of the principall for thy  
Meditation.

First therefore consider the shortnes of  
the life of man, being restrained within the  
limittes of threescore and ten or fourscore  
yeares, whatsoeuer the ouerplus be, it is but  
labour and sorrow, as the Prophet speaketh:  
Out of this time, if thou doest sub-  
tract thy infancy, which time thou liuedst  
rather the life of a beast, then a man; the  
time that thou spendest in sleepe, for then  
thou art depriued of the vse of reason,  
which only distinguisheth man from other  
creatures, and thou wilt finde thy life to  
bee far shorter then euer thou didst ima-  
gine.

*of Meditation.*

17

gine. This time if thou doest compare with  
the eternity of the world to come, thou  
wilt find it to be lesse, then a moment.  
Coniecture then the foolish madnes of the  
louers of this worlde, who that they might  
enioye one only momentary pleasure of  
this transitory life, doe not feare to expose  
them selves to the losse of eternitye.

Then take to thy consideration the vn-  
certainty of this life (which is a second mi-  
serie) for not only it is most short, but the  
brevitie it selfe is most vncertaine and  
doubtful. For who is there, that attaineth  
to the age of three or foure score? how ma-  
ny are extinguished at their very entrance  
into the worlde? how many perish in the  
flowere of their youth? You knowe not  
sayth CHRIST, whē your Lord is to come:  
whether in the first watch or 2. or 3. or in  
the cocke crowing. Which that thou ma-  
iest the better vnderstand, call to minde  
especially thy domesticke friends, and  
other men placed in dignity and authority,  
whom inexorable death hath at diuerse  
ages (some yonger, some older) suddenly  
taken out of this worlde, irritating their  
vaine and longe-life-promising hopes.

Ponder 4. the inconstancy and mutabi-  
lity of this present life, neuer continuing in  
one state. The dispositiō of the body often

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chan-

changeth , not alwaies enjoying health, but subiect to frequent diseases: but if thou reflect vpon the minde, thou shalt see that like the troubled Ocean it is tossed vp and downe with the boisterous windes of her vntamed passions , inordinate appetites, fluctuatinge cogitations, which vpo euery occasion doe disturbe her quiet. Consider lastly, the instability of the goods of fortune (as they tearme them ) to how many chaunces they are obnoxious, neuer suffering the temporall substance to stand still in one stay , therby to make men happy and prosperous; but like a wheele is turned vp side-downe, without any intermission. Consider also the continuall motiō of our life, neuer resting night nor day, but goeth forward without ceasinge , and euery day more and more wasteth it selfe , so that it may not vnfitly be compared to a candle; which by little and little consumeth it selfe, and when it giueth the clearest light, the sooner it approacheth vnto its end, also to a flower , which springeth vp in the morninge, at noone fadeth, and at night wholly withereth away. Which God Almighty speakinge by the Prophet ISAIE , of this mutation, excellently shaddoweth in these wordes: *Omnis caro fenum, & omnis gloria eius quasi flos agri.* All flesh is hay , and all the

the glorie of it is like a flower of the feild.

Which words S. HIEROME expoundinge saith , if one doth rightly consider the frailty of the flesh, and that we growe and decrease accordinge to the moments of howres, neuer remaininge in one state, and that the very thinge we now speake, doe, or write, passeth a way as part of our life, he will not doubt to confesse that all flesh is hay, and the glorie therof as a flower, or the greene medowes. He that is now an infant will by and by be a little childe, then presently a younge man, growinge towardes his decreped age, through vncertaine seasons, and before he hath contented him selfe in youth , fealeth old age to come vpon him. The beutifull woman which did drawe after her wholl troops of gallants in her youth , her face is now fourrowed with deformed wrinkles, and she that before was a pleasure , is now vgly to behold.

Consider ḡ. how deceitfull this life is, (which is the worst condition of all deludinge the louers of the world with a miserable blindnes) for we thinke it amiable, when in it selfe it is vgly : we thinke it sweet, when it is full of gall and bitternes: when it is circumscribed with in the shortest

test limits, we thinke it longe. When it is full of misery, we thinke it so happie, that there is no danger, no hazard that me will not expose themselues vnto, for the conseruation of it, yea with the losse of eternall glorie, when they doe not feare to comitt those sinnes which make them vnworthie of so great felicitie.

Consider sixthly, that besides the breuitie, and other fore-mentioned conditiōs, that small time wherein we liue, is subiect to innumerable miseries both spirituall and corporall. That it may well be called a torrent of teares, and oceane of infinite molestations. S. **HIEROME** reporteth how **XERXES** that potent kinge, who ouer turned mountaines, and made bridges ouer the seas, when from a high place, he beheld that infinite multitude of men, and his innumerable army, he wept, to thinke that not one of those men there present, should be aliue after a hūdred yeares. And presently addinge, ô that we could but ascend vnto such a turrett, to behold the wholl earth vnder our feete, then would I manifest vnto thee, the ruins of the world, nation risinge againtt nation, and kingedome againtt kingdome, some tormented, others slaine, some drowned, others led into captiuitie. Here marrynge, heer  
mour-

mourninge, some borne, others dyinge, some aboundinge in wealth, others begginge. And not only the mighty army of **XERXES** but all the men of the world, in a short space to be turned to dust and ashes.

Take notice a little, of the labours and infirmities of the body, the cogitations and passions of the minde: the diuerse dangers in euery, state and all seasons threatninge the ruine of man: and thou wilt euery day, more clearly vnderstand the miseries of this life, that when thou seest, what is to be hoped for in this world, thou maiest with a noble courrage contemne it.

The last of all these miseries, is death, both in respect of soule or bodie, a thinge most terrible: for in this moment the body is disrobed of all the thinges, in this world. And the soule in this point receiuesth the ioyfull or fearefull sentence of eternity.

These thinges well considered, thou wilt be instructed how short and miserable the glorie of this world is, and how it ought to be hated and despised of thee.



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*A Meditation for VVednesday.*

**T**His day thou shalt meditate on death: the consideration of vvhich is very profitable to attaine vnto true vvifedome, to beate dovvn sinne; and to excite men timely to cast vp their accompts vvhich they are to make in the latter day.

Consider first the vncertainty of that hover vvherein death is to seaze vpon thee, thou knowest not the day, nor the place, nor the state vvhether in it shall finde thee: only thou beleuest that thou must die, for other things thou art vvholly ignorant of; except that it oftentimes setteth vpon a man vvhether he little dreameth of it, and thinketh it to be furthest of.

Consider secondly, that greiuious separation, vvhich shall be at the point of death, not only from euery thinge of this present life, vvhether thou tookest content, but also betwixt the soule and body, vvhose society vvas most anciēt, most louinge and deare. If a man taketh it greiuiously to be banished, to be thrust out of his natie Soile, and to be deprived of that aire vvhetherin he first breathed, although he should carry all others, his dearest thinges vvhith him, how ~~far~~ more bitterly vould he take that general

nerall exile, vvhetherin he must be vveaned from all vvorldly thinges, his hovvse, his meanes, his father, his mother, his childre, his freinds, vncertaine vvhether he him selfe must goe. Then shall he be deprived of the light and the commerce of all humane creatures?

If the oxen vvhetherin he is disioyned from his fellowe vvhith vvhom he vvas vvent in the same yoake to be coupled, vvhith belovvinge doth expresse his sorrowe, vvhetherin thou shalt perceiue thy selfe to be violently pulled from these thy confederats.

Consider also that anxiety vvhetherin the minde of the dyinge is tormented, vvhetherin abstracted from al corporall busines, he only thinketh vvhether shall become of his body, and vvhether shall betyde his soule, how his body must be cast seauen foot into the earth, to be eaten of vvormes; and vvhether vwill become of his soule, vvhether it is to remaine, he is altogether vncertaine: vvhetherin cogitation doth surely much trouble the minde of him that dieth, vvhetherin he certainly knoweth there is heauen or hell to be expected, and he at equall distance from them both, neither can he tell vvhetherin of these two contraries vwill fall to his share.

An other no lesse affliction followeth, that presently he must giue a strict accōpt of all his forpassed life, to the eternal iudge, which men of great sanctity were wont to feare, when ARSENIUS in the last point of life, was seen of his disciples to weep, and tréble, they asked him why he feared death he answered. *Reuera filioli, metus hic quo me videtis affici nunquam omnino à me recessit ex quo factus sum Monachus.* Indeed my childre the feare wherwith ye see me nowe afflicted, hath neuer quite left me from the time I was first made a Monke.

Then all the sinnes of a mans former life come rushinge into his memory, representinge themselues vnto him, as it were in battaile aray, to destroy him, but especially his greivous sinnes wherin he tooke greatest delight, are continually present to his fancie, which doe so torment him that they driue him into a dangerous despaire of his saluation: and the remembrance of those pleasures, which before were gratefull, are now most bitter vnto him. That the wise man saith true: *Ne intuaris vinum quando stauescit cum splenduerit in vitro color eius ingreditur blande, & in nouissimo mordebit vt coluber, & sicut regulus venena diffundet:* Behold not wine when it waxeth yelow, when the colour therof

Simon  
Metaph in  
vita eius  
to. 4. apud  
surium.

Proverb.  
23.

therof shall shine in the glasse: it goeth in pleasantly, but in the end, it will bite like a snake and as a basiliske it spreads abroad his poisons.

Such a poisoned cup the enemy of mankinde presenteth to the louers of the world to drinke. Such is the liquour of the outward gilded cup of Babilon.

VVicked man seinge himselfe enuironed with so many accusers, beginneth then to feare the success of his latter iudgement, and to bewaile himselfe vwith bitter outcries, ô miserable and unhappie man that haue liued thus longe in darknes, and vwalked in the footstepps of iniquitie, what shall novve become of me? if S. PAVLE saith such as a man soweth, such Gal. 6. he shall reap. I that haue sowed nothing else but the vvorkes of the flesh, what should I expect but corruption?

If S. IOHN saith, that no vnclane thinge shall enter into that heauenly cittie, vvhich is paved vwith burnished gold, vvhich part shall I haue therin, that am defiled vwith all kinde of luxurie.

Then follove the Sacraments of the Church, Confessiō, Communion, extreame Vnction, vvhich are the last helps of our holy Mother the Catholique Church, to succour his dyinge soule.

From

From all these foresaid circumstances, thou maiest gather with what anxietie, a wicked man is oppressed at the hower of his departure. Then he will wish that he had led a better life, and what great austeritie he would vse, if longer time might be permitted to him. Then would he vehemently implore the diuine assistance, but the greatnes of his infirmity, and the pangues of death approachinge will not suffer him, which will be so great that he shall scarce be able to tourne his thoughtes vpon God.

Behold after these, the Symtomes of this last infirmitie forruners of death, and harbengers of thy last end, which certainly in themselues are horrible, and to the beholders terrible. The stomacke swelleth, the speech faileth, the feet beginne to die, the knees wax cold, the nostrells fall, the eies sinck, the face waxeth pale, the tongue can no longer performe its office, finally the striuinge of the soule goinge out of the body, disturbeth all the senses, and leaueth them wholly without vigour.

But who is able to expresse the anguish of the soule, which is farr greater? for then it is in a mighty agonie, both in regarde of the doubtfull euent of her saluation: and of the strict account she is presently to  
make

make of the deeds of her wholl life: as also because she naturally loueth the body, she can not be separated from it but with great affliction, especially knowinge not what shall become of her.

Hauinge well contemplated the soule departinge the bodie, thou must yet make two iournies more: one in accompaninge the body to the graue, the other in followinge the soule to the decidinge of her cause. And thou shalt see the euent of both. Marke therfore, the dead carcas how they prepare a windinge sheete for it. What expedition they vse to carry it out of the house. Consider the solemnity and rites wher with it is carried to the graue. Howe the bells ringe, and euery one inquire of the dead. The office of the church also, the prayers of the standers by, the dolefull tune of the church, while the body is carried to the graue and buried. The teares of freinds and kindred, and all those ceremonies which are wont to be performed about the dead.

Leauinge the bodie vnder the earth, accompany the soule passinge to a newe and vnknowne region, where she expecteth the sentence of the eternall iudge. Imagine with thy selfe that thou art present at this tribunall, and the wholl court  
of

of heauen, waitinge with deepe silence, and great attention the euent and sentence of this iudgement, here must be giuen a strict accompt of all receiuinges and disbursementes. I say accompt, of thy life, of thy goods, of thy familie, of the diuine inspirations, of the meanes and occasions to liue well, and finally of the blood of IESVS CHRIST, and the vse of his Sacraments, and accordinge as his accompt is, so the sentence shall be pronounced.

*A Meditation for Thursday.*

**T**His day thou shalt meditate vpon the latter iudgemēt, to the end that thou maiest stirr vp in thy soule, two principall effects, which euery Christiā soule ought to haue, to witt, the feare of God and hatred of sinne.

Place therefore first before thine eies, howe terrible that day will be, wherein all the litigious causes of the sonnes of *Adam* shall be decided, and a finall end put to the processes of our wholl life, and what shall be ordained of those for all eternitie, shall be publickly pronounced to the veiue of the wholl world.

This day comprehendeth in it, all the dayes of all ages, past, present; and to come. And exacteth a seuerer accompt of all the actions

actions of all men, powringe out all the fury vpon men, heaped vp together from forepassed ages; because then the torrent of God Almightyes vengeance, shall ouerflowe beyonde its limits, rushinge with a greater violence, by howe much more it was the longer detained, and at once shall ouerwhelme all Iniquity from the creation of the world.

Consider secondly the dreadfull signes which shall goe before this day. For our Sauour saith: *Erunt signa in sole & luna & stellis.* And all créatures of heauen and earth shall tremble, vnderstandinge their ruine to be at hande. Men also, as our Sauour saith, worne and withered a way perceiuinge the horrible raginge of the sea: and they themselues scarce a heares breadth distant from death. Seeinge also the mightie risings, and inundations of the water; and by these coniecturinge the calamities and miserie, these prodigious signes threatē to the world: wilbe amazed with such a horrour, that they will be without life, without voyce, without colour, or human shape: they will be dead before they die, dreadinge their damnation before the sentence be pronounced, immagininge the future paine, by their present distemper. Then cuerie one out of exceedinge feare,

fear, will be so solicitous of himselfe, that he will nothinge regard others whosoever they be, parents, or husbands, or wifs, or freinds or companions.

Imagine thirdly, the vniuersall deluge of fire, which shall goe before this iudgment: that dreadfull noise of the tumpett, which one of the Archangels shall blowe; wherwith all the people of the wholl world shalbe sommoned together, in one place makinge their appearance before the iudgment seat: and last of all that dreadfull Maiestie; the supreme iudge of the quick and dead, shall assume to him selfe vpon this tribunall.

Fourthly consider what exact accompt shall be required of euery one; Holy Iob saith: *Vere scio quod ita est quod non iustificetur homo compositus Deo. Si voluerit contendere cum eo, non poterit respondere vnum pro mille.* Indeed I knowe it is so, and that man cannot be iustified compared with God if he will contend with him he cannot answer him one for at housand. What then shall become of man when God shall beginne to handle him accordinge to rigour of his iustice? when he shall speake to his conscience inwardly?

O wicked and peruerse man, what hast thou seene in me, that out of the height of  
im-

impiety, despisinge me, thou shouldest ioyne with my enemies? I haue created thee accordinge to mine owne Image and likenes; I haue illuminated thee with the light of faith: I haue seasoned thee in the Christian faith from thy infancy: I haue redeemed thee with my owne blood; for thy sake I haue fasted, watched, prayed, vndergone tedious iournies, sweat blood, and endured manie more miseries in the course of my life; for the loue of thee, I haue suffered persecutions, iniuries, blasphemies, and the verie Crosse it selfe. This Crosse is my witnes, these nailes are my witnesses, these woundes are my witnesses, which thou seest imprinted in my handes and feete; to conclude heauen and earth that did behold my passion are my witnesses. Howe I haue drawne thy soule. How I haue redeemed thee with the ranfome of my pretious blood.

Howe hast thou esteemed this pretious margarite, bought by me with an inestimable price. O generation of vipers, why hast thou chosen to serue my enemy with a great deale of paine, and neglected thy duetic towards me thy creatour and redeemer which thou mightst haue performed with a great deale of pleasure. I haue called thee and thou wouldest not answer  
to

to my vocatiō: I haue knocked at the dore of thy heart; and thou hast refused me entrance. I haue stretched my armes vpon the Crosse, and thou hast not regarded me, thou despisedst my counsell, promises and theatinges. Pronounce therefore ô yee Angels, the sentence and be iudges betwixt me and my vine. *Numquid amplius aliquid facere potui vineæ meæ quod non feci?* What could I doe any thinge more to my vine that I haue not done?

Isai. 5.

What will the reprobate and scoffers at diuine misteries answere? they that haue hished at vertue, derided simplicitie, and obserued better the lawes of the world then of God? they that haue stopped their eares at the voyce of God? they who haue contemned his diuine inspirations? they who haue bene rebellious against his commandements, and ingratefull for his benefitts? What will those libertins say, who lettinge themselues loose to all vices, haue liued as if there were no God at all, or that he did not regarde the thinges that are done belowe? What will those say, who haue followed their comodities, gust and pleasure for a lawe. *Quid facietis in die visitationis & calamitatis de longe venientis? ad cuius confugietis auxilium? & vbi derelinquetis gloriam vestram vt non incuruimine sub vinculo & cum inter-*

*interfectis cadatis.* VVhat will yee doe in the day of visitation and of calamity cominge from farr? to whose help will ye flee, and where will yea leaue your glory, that ye be not bowed vnder the bond, and fall with the slaine.

Fiftly consider, that terrible sentence, which after iudgement, the supreme iudge pronounceth against the wicked, which he will thunder out with such a dreadfull noyse, that at the sound thereof the eares of the standers by will ringe, as the Prophet ESAY saith: *Labia eius repleta sunt indignatione, & lingua eius quasi ignis deuorans.* His lipps are filled with indignation, and his tongue as a deuouringe fire. For what flames can be so ardent as those wordes: *Discedite à me maledicti in ignem æternum, qui paratus est Diabolo & Angelis eius.* Goe from me yea cursed into euerlastinge fire, prepared for the Diuill and his Angels. Euery word of which sentence is full of bitter torment. For who is able to comprehend what this separation is, what curse, what fire, what society, and finally what eternity to which the wicked are adiudged by force of this sentence?

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## A Meditation for Fryday.

**T**His day thou shalt meditate vpon the torments of hell, that duely ponderinge them, thou maiest haue a more awe of God Almighty, and a greater hatred of sinne. S. BONAVENTURE teacheth that these torments are to be considered accordinge to certaine similitudes sett downe by holy men, concerninge this matter. Wherefore it will not be beside our purpose (as the same Doctour in the same place saith) to imagine hell, a horrible confused CHAOS, a lake vnder the earth, a deepe fyery dungeon, or as a spacious city, darke and terrible, burninge with obscure and fearfull fire; filled with waylinges, howlinges, weepinge for the inexplicable paines.

In this miserable and vnhappie place are two kindes of torments, *pæna sensus*, & *pæna damni*, the punishment of sence, and the punishmēt of losse of God Almighty.

Consider that there is no outward, or inward sence of the damned, which is not afflicted with a proper torment; for as the damned in all their members and senses haue offended God, vsinge them as instruments and weapons wherby, neglectinge

## of Meditation.

tinge the Society and lawe of God, they serued sinne. So the diuine iustice hath ordained, that euery sence accordinge to their desert, should be tormented with a proper punishment, the wanton and lasciuious eies, shalbe tortured, with the hydious aspect of diuils. The eares which were open to lyes, detractions, and other impurities; shall ringe with vnwonted clamours, out-cries and blasphemies. The noses which were delighted with sweet odours, shalbe poysoned with an intollerable stinck. The tast which was glutted with dainty fare, shalbe tormented with intollerable hunger and thirst. The tongue which vttered detractions and murmuringes, shall drinke the gall of dragons. The wanton which gaue consent to their brutish desires shalbe frozen with extreame cold and as holy Iob saith: *Ab aquis nivium transibit ad colorem nivium*: From the waters of snowe they shall passe to the extremity of heat.

The interiour senses also shall not want their torments, the imagination shalbe tormented with the apprehension of present paines, the memory with the callinge to minde of fore-passed pleasures, the vnderstandinge with the feare of

future greifs, the will with an incredible hatred and raging towards God.

*In illa  
Euangl.  
ubi erit  
fletus &  
stridor  
dentium.*

There as S. GREGORIE saith shalbe, intollerable cold vnquenchable fire, a neuer dyinge worme, a stinch which none is able to endure, horred darknes, greuious whippings, vizards of diuils, confusion of sinners, and desperation of al good. Tell me I pray thee couldest thou endure on little moment the least part of al these tormentes? surely it would be very greuious, if not intollerable for thee. What the will it be to suffer this wholl inundation of euils, at one time in all thy members and senses, externall, and internall, not one or a thousand nights, but for all eternitie? What sence, what tongue, what minde of man is able to conceiue or expresse these thinges?

Neither are these the greatest tormentes the damned suffer. There remaineth yet a more greuious, which the diuines doe call the punishment of losse, which consisteth in the perpetuall priuation of the beatificall vision of God and his Saintes, and of all that glorious and blessed Societic. For that is the greatest torment, that deprieth man of the most excellent good. Seeinge therefore that God is that effectuall and cheefest good of all goods, to be depriued  
of

of him, must needs be the greatest of all euils,

These are the generall tormentes of the damned; besides these, there are other particular tormentes, wherwith euery one accordinge to their sinnes are afflicted. The proud, the enuious, the couetous, the luxurious, and other vitious haue their peculiar tormentes; the measure of paine there, shalbe proportionable to their pleasure here, confusion there proportionable to their glory and presumption here: pouertie and want, to plenty, hunger and thirst, to gluttonie and to former delights.

To all these aforesaid tormentes, eternitie is yet to be added, which is as it were the seale and key of all the rest; for if at length, they should haue an end, they were some way tollerable. That which is restrained to a certaine time can not be so vntransferable, but this punishment is euerlastinge, without solace, without relaxation, without diminution; where remaineth no hope of an end of their tormentes, or tormentours, or themselues that suffer them, but is, as it were a perpetuall and irreuocable banishmet, neuer to be recalled, which is a thinge of importance to be noted. That the minde may be stirred vp therby, to that sauinge feare and loue of God.



From this eternitie of torments proceedeth that great hatred wherwith they are incensed against God. Hence proceed those horrible blasphemies and curses which with their impure mouthes they raile at God, sayinge. Cursed be God which hath created vs, and hath condemned vs to an euerlasting death, which doth so oppresse and torments vs that notwithstandinge neuer killeth. Cursed be his power, which doth so greivously afflict vs. Cursed be his wisdom that hath laied open all our wickednes. Cursed be his iustice that hath exacted eternall punishment for temporall sins. Cursed be his Crosse which hath not benefited vs. Cursed be his blood that was shed, seeinge it requireth reuenge against vs. Cursed be the Mother of God, who although she be pious and propitious to all, yet notwithstandinge hath shewed herselfe to vs cruell and vnmercifull. Cursed be all the Saintes of God raigninge with CHRIST, and reioyceinge at our miseries.

These are the hymnes, this is that harsh melody, which the damned doe continually iarr, railing at the almighty with detested blasphemies for all eternitie.

*A Me-*

*A Meditation for Saterday.*

**T**His day thou shalt meditate vpon the glory of the Saintes of God, which may more eagerly inflame thy soule, to contemne the vanities of this world, and aspire to that eternall felicitie.

To the end thou mayest get a better knowledge and gust of this inestimable glory. Consider these fiew things. First the excellency of the place. Secondly the ioy of that society. Thirdly the vision of God. Forthly the glory of their bodies. Fifthly the compleat perfection of all abundant good.

In the excellency of the place, take notice of the admirable and wonderfull spacioufnes of it; in approued authours thou readest, that the least of the fixed starrs of heauen, is bigger then the wholl earth, and some of them doe exceede the earth two or three hundred times in bignes. Then cast vp thine cies to heauen and consider the innumerable multitude of them in the firmament, and thou shalt see a great deale of void space, where many more may be placed, howe cast thou then but be astonished at the greatnes of so rare a fabricke?

C 4

Then

Then consider the beutie of that place, which no tongue is able to expresse, for if God Almighty in this place of banishment and vale of miserie, hath made many thinges of admirable and comely hue: of what great beuty, and how much odored dost thou thinke that place to be: which God would haue to be the ordinarie seat of his glory: the Pallace of his Majesty: the mansion of the elect, and the Paradise of all pleasure?

After the beuty of the place, consider the Nobilitie of the Inhabitants, whose number, sanctity, riches, and glory, are farr beyound our imaginatiō. S. JOHN saith the multitude are so great that they are innumerable. S. DIONYSIVS affirmeth that the multitude of Angels doe farr exceed the nūber of sublunary creatures. Whom S. THOMAS followinge thinketh, that as the heavens by many degrees exceed the bignes of the earth, beinge but as it were a point of them: so proportionably the glorious Spirits, therein contained, doe surpasse all earthly thinges. VVhat can be thought more admirable? assuredly this well pondered would make a man loose himselfe in the abyffe of God Almightyes goodnes.

Yea without comparifon euery one of these blessed Spirits is far more beautifull to the

the eie then all this visible world. O what would it be to contemplate the incomprehensible number of so rare and glorious Spirits? and to vnderstand their severall offices and perfections? how the Angels bringe messages? how the Archangels Minister? how the Principalities triumph? how the Powers reioyce? how the Dominations bare sway? how the Vertues shine? how the Thrones doe glitter? how the Cherubins doe illuminate? how the Seraphins doe burne with loue? and finally how all with one vnanimous consent doe prayse Almighty God.

If the conuersation and fellowship of good men be so delightfull, what pleasure will it be, to be assortiated to so great a multitude of Saintes? to be conuersant with the Apostles? to talke with the Prophets? to discourse with Martyrs? and to enioy the blessed familiarity of all the elect? O but what will it be to enioy his presence whome the morninge starrs doe magnifie? whose beutie the sun and moone admire? before whome the holy Angels and all the celestially Spirits doe prostrate themselues. That *sumum bonum*, that infinite good, which in it selfe comprehendeth all good whatsoever, O what content will the heart of man feale to behold him,

him, who is one and all. Who although he be most simple without composition, yet containeth in himselfe the perfections of all thinges created. VVhat can the heart of man desire greater?

If it were so much to see and heare Kinge SALOMON, that the Queene of SABA cominge from farr remote parts, moued with his great wisdome, should say:

3. Reg. 10. *Beati viri tui & beati serui tui, hi qui stant coram te semper & audiunt sapientiam tuam: Happy are thy men and happie are thy seruants, those who stande before thee alwayes and heare thy wisdome. VVhat would it be to behold that true SALOMON? that eternall wisdome? that immense maiestie? that inestimable beutie? that infinite goodnes? and which is more to enioy him for all eternitie?*

This is the essentiall and truest glory of the Saints: this is the last end and centre of all our wishes. Consider moreouer the glory of their bodies, which shalbe beautified with these fowre giftes, subtilitie, agilitie, impassibilitie and claritie. VVhich will be so great, that euery one of the elect (as our blessed Sauour saith) shall glitter like the sun in the kingdomo of his father.

If

If one only sun doth so reioyce and illuminate this vniuerse: VVhat doest thou thinke, so many brighter sunnes will doe which shall there shine?

VVhat should I speake of other ioyes which there shalbe: health without infirmitie: libertie without violence: beutie without deformity: immortallitie without corruption: aboundance without want: rest without trouble: securitie without feare: riches without pouerity: ioy without sorrowe: honour without contradiction. There as S. AVGVSTINE saith, shalbe true glory when euery one shalbe comended without error or flattery. True honour shal be denied to none that is worthy of it, and it shalbe giuen to none vnworthy, neither shall any vnworthy attempt it, there, where none shalbe permitted but the worthy. There shalbe true peace, where they shall suffer no contradiction frō themselves or others: the reward of vertue shalbe he which gaue vertue. And he hath promised to giue himselfe. Then which, better or greater nothinge can be. For what other thinge is it that he spake by the Prophet: *Ero illorum Deus, & ipsi erunt mihi plebs*: I will be their God, and they shalbe my people. If I doe not who is it that can satiate their soules?

I wil-

*D. Aug. l. 22. de ciuit. Del cap. 30.*

*Leui. 26.*

I wilbe that good which can possibly be desired of man. Their life, their peace, their honour. For so is that vnderstood which the Apostle speaketh: *Vt sit Deus in omnibus.* That God be in all. He shalbe the end of all our desires, which shalbe contemplated without end, shalbe loued without tediousnes, shalbe prayesed without ceasinge.

The place of the saints, if thou doest behold the spaciousnes of it, it shalbe most ample, if the beutie, most delicious, if the splendour, most exceeding bright. There shalbe admirable delightfull society, no vicissitude of times, the day shall not succeed the night, nor the night the day, but all time shalbe there a like. There shalbe one perpetuall springe, which the holy Ghost, with a wonderfull temper shall alwayes make greene and flourishing, there shall all celebrate euerlastinge holy-dayes, reioying with vnspeakable gladnes, there shall all sound their instruments of musick and singe prayes to him, by whose power they liue and raigne for all eternity.

O celestiaall city, secure habitation, palace flowinge with all delightes, people without murmuring, quiet Citizans, men without pouertie. O that I may at length enjoy thee. O that the dayes of my banishment

ment were ended. VVhen will that ioyfull day come? VVhen shall I goe out of this mortality? VVhen shall I come and appeare before thy face O God.

*A Meditation for Sunday.*

**T**His day thou shalt spend, in recogitating God Almightye his benefitts, that thou mayest bee gratefull to him for the same, and thy heart inflamed with the loue of him, that hath heaped so manie fauours vpon thee. VVhich seeing they bee innumerable, thou shalt take fower of the cheifest to thy consideration, which are the benefitts of thy Creation, Preservation, Redemption, and Vocation, besides particular benefitts specially bestowed vpon thee.

Touching the benefit of thy creation, examine diligently what thou wert before, what God hath giuen thee when thou hadest no precedent meritts. Behold thy comely bodie well composed of its members and senses: Looke vpon thy noble soule, beautified with these excellent faculties, the vnderstanding, will, and memorie.

Remember that when he gaue thee thy soule, he gaue thee all thinges, seing there is

no perfection in any creature, which is not found more excellent in the soule of man. Hence it manifestly followeth, that when God bestowed this great benefitt vpon thee, he with it bestowed what els soeuer thou hast.

Concerninge the benefitt of thy conseruation and preseruation, consider that all thy being dependeth vpon the diuine prouidence and disposure, without which thou canst not moue a foote, or subsist the least moment of time. More-ouer for thy vse he hath created the wholl vniuersall world, and all thinges therin contained; the earth, the sea, birds, fishes, beasts, plants, nay the verie Angels themselues he hath ordained to doe thee seruice. Consider thy health, the strength of limes, and thy verie life it selfe, which thou enioyest, to be the great benefitts of God Almighty, who, by dayly nourishment and other temporall helps, cōserueth all these in their proper vigour. Obserue the miseries and tribulatiōs vnto which other mortall men are subiect; into which, as others thou hadst easily fallē, had not the diuine goodnes protected thee

In the benefitt of thy Redemptiō: consider the abundant good both in quantitie and qualitie, which he hath purchased to thee by it.

Then

Then call to minde the bitternes of his torments, which he suffered in soule and bodie to ease thee; and that the acknowledgment of these fauours may take a greater impression in thee, in the mysterie of his passion take notice of these fower thinges. First, who it is that suffereth, secondly what he suffered, thirdly for whome he suffered, fourthly why he suffered.

He that suffered, was God, what he suffered, weare the most greuious torments, and such that neuer any mortall man did endure the like.

For whome? for most ingratefull creatures, cursed and worthy of hell fyre.

VWhy? not for any comoditie or profit of his owne, or that we had merited so much by our precedent meritts. But only moued to it by his infinite loue and bounty tovvards vs.

Cōcerninge the benefit of thy vocation, cōsider the grace he gaue thee, vvhē he infused into thee, the Christian faith, by the receiuing of Baptisme and other Sacraments: when he did enrolle thee in the booke of his eternitie, amongst faithfull soules. If after thy first vocatiō, vvhē by sinne thou hadest lost the innocencie of baptisme, he hath dravne thee againe out of the mire of thy ovvne corruptiō, restored thee to grace and

and brought thee back againe into the way of thy owne salutation: What thanks giuinge oughtest thou to render vnto him, for so great a benefit? How great was his mercie to thee, that with longanimitie he expected so manie yeares? that he permitted thee to spend thy dayes in so great impuritie of wickednes? that he hath often visited thee with good and holy inspirations? that he did not cutt of the thred of thy peruerse life, as he serued others in the same place? To conclude, that he called thee with such efficacious grace, that he restored thee from death to life, and opened thine eies to contemplate his cleare light? How great was his clemencie towards thee, that he supported thee with his grace, not to returne back againe to thy former sinns. But to ouercome the enemies of mankind, and constantly to perseuere in a vertuous course.

These are the comon benefits. Besides these, there are manie secret ones known to none but those that receiue them, and others, which indeed are not cleerly known vnto themselves, but only to him that bestowed them. How often for thy prid, arrogancie, ingratitude and flout hast thou deserved to be left of God as many for lesser causes haue becne? Yet not  
with-

withstandinge he would not? How often hath God with his singulare prouidence, exempted thee from euill, remoued occasions of offending, brokē the snare that the enimie had laied for thy perdition; hath frustrated his expectation, and would not permit that his counsell and machinations should preuaile against thee? how often hath he done to vs as he did to S. PETER in the Gospell: *Ecce Satanas expetiuit vos, vt tribaret sicut triticum. Ego autem rogavi pro te, vt non deficiat fides tua:* Behold Sattan hath required to haue you for to sift as vvheat but I haue praied for thee that thy faith faile not. And vvho can knowv these secret benefits but God alone? benefits, vvwhich be palpable are easie to be seene, but those vvwhich be priuate consistinge in the vvorkinge of good or preuentinge of ill the mind of man can not perfectly comprehend. Wherefore it is meet and conuenient to reason, that vve should render immortall thanks to God, for all these benefits and cōfesse ingenuously, that vve haue receiued more, thē vve are able to restore, and that our obligations tovwards him, are so great, that vvith any goods of ours vve shall neuer liue to requite them, vvhen vve cannot so much as number or comprehend them in our vnderstandinge.

## CHAP. III.

*Of the time, and fruite of these Meditations.*

**B**EHOULD (Christian Reader) thou hast seauen former meditations, accomodated to euery day of the weeke, not so, that it is an offence to meditate vpon an other matter ; when as we haue said before , whatsoeuer inflameth the heart, to the loue and feare of God, and to the keepinge of his comandements , may profitably bee assumed for matter of meditation. VVe therfore out of so great a number haue selected these, both, for that they containe the cheifest misteries of our faith, and that in them is force and efficacie , to rouse vp our souls to the loue and feare of God: as also to set before nouices, which haue need of a guide, prepared and as it were fore-chewed matter, least they confusedly wander vp and downe in this spacious feild, without any certaintie, now meditating vpon one thinge and presently vpon an other.

More-ouer these meditatiōs, as wee haue said

*of Meditation.*


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saied elsewhere, sute best with those which doe beginne to turne to God Almightye from their wicked courses. For these had need, to be helped by the consideration of these thinges, to the detestation and horrour of sinne , the feare of God, the contempt of the world , which are as it were the first steps to the amendment of our former peruerse life , therefore it is good that they should sometime insist in them, that they may haue the better foundation for other ensuing vertues.



D 2

CHAP.

  
 OF SEAVEN OTHER  
**MEDITATIONS**  
 OF  
**THE PASSION**  
 OF  
**OUR LORD,**

And the manner howv it ought to  
be meditated vpon.

C H A P. IV.

**H**ERE followe seauen other Meditations of the Passion of CHRIST, his Resurrection and Ascension into heauen, to which others of his holy life may well be added.

*Six things chiefly to be* But we must note, that in the Passion of our blessed Sauour, six thinges cheefly are to be meditated vpon. First, the bitterness of

of his sorrowe, that we may compassionate *considered* with him. Secondly, the greatnes of our *in the pas-* sinnes, which were the cause of his tor- *sion of* ments, that we may abhorr them. Third- *christ.* ly, the greatnes of the benefit, that we may be gratefull for it. Fourthly, the excellencie of the diuine charitie and bountie therein manifested, that we may loue him more feruently. Fifthly, the conueniencie of the misterie, that we may be drawne to admiration of it. Lastly, the multiplictie of vertues of our blessed Sauour which did shine in this stupendious misterie, that we may partly immitate and partly admire them; wherfore in the midst of these meditations let vs some time compassionate with our blessed Sauour in the extremitie of his sorrowes, extreame indeed, both by reason of the tendernes of his bodie, as also for the great affection he bore vnto our soules. He did suffer them without any manner of consolation, as we shall speake herafter in its proper place. Sometimes let vs stirr vp in our selues compunctiō for our sinnes, which were the cause of these his so great sufferinges. Sometimes let vs kindle in our soules an ardent affection, considering his great affection towards vs, which vpon the Crosse he declared and



manifested to the whole world. And the benefit which he bestowed vpon vs in his passion, because he bought vs with the inestimable price of his precious blood, of which only we reape the fruite and commoditie. Sometimes let vs ruminare vpon the conueniencie of the manner, his eternal wisdome would he pleased to chuse, to cure our miseries, to satisfie for our sins, to releue our necessities, to make vs partakers of his glorie, to repress our prid, to induce vs to the loue and ioyfull sufferinge of pouertie, iniuries, austeritie, and all commendable laborious exercices. Moreouer it will not be befids the matter, to looke into the admirable examples which did principally shine in the life and passion of our sweet Sauour, his meeknes, patience, obedience, mercie, pouertie, charitie, humilitie, bountie, modestie, and other his rare vertues, which in all his actions did glitter like starrs in the firmament. And cheifly to this end, let vs meditate vpon these things, that as neere as we can, we may imitate them. Let vs shake off slouth, and eleuate our soules, that as much as in our power lyeth with the help of his holy grace we may trace his sacred foot-steps. This is the best and most profitable methode of meditatinge vpon our Blessed Sauours pas-

passion, that is to say, that ther-by we be drawne to imitation, and so to be wholly transformed into our Blessed Sauour, that each one may say with the Apostle: *Vino autem iam non ego, viuit vero in me Christus*: And nowe I liue but not I, but CHRIST in me. Moreouer in meditating our Blessed Sauours passion, we must set him before the eyes of our soules, imageninge that we see, as present the panges of his heauy sufferings; and we must not only insit vpon the bare historie of his passion, but we must consider other circumstances, namely these fower, first, who it is that suffereth, secondly, for whome, thirdly, howe, fourthly, why. First, he that suffereth is God, omnipotent, infinite, immense. For whome? the most vngratefull creature in the world, and les regarding his benefits. Howe? with most profound humilitie, charitie, bountie, meeknes, mercie, patience, modestie, &c. Why? not for his owne commoditie, nor our merits; but for his immense pietie, mercie, goodnes and loue towards vs.

Last of all, let vs not onely contemplate his outward, but his inward torments, for much more may be considered in the soule then in the bodie of CHRIST, both for the more sensible feelinge of his passion there,

as also for diuers other considerations therein.

Thus hauing set downe this short preface let vs proceed to the handlinge of the misteries themselues of our blessed Sauiours passion.

### Seauen other Meditations.

#### *A Meditation for Munday.*

**T**His day after thou hast seigned thy selfe with the signe of the Crosse, thou shalt meditate vpon the washinge of the disciples feete, and institution of the blessed Sacrament.

Consider, ô my soule, at this supper sweet IESVS himselfe to be present, contemplate that inestimable example of humilitie, which he there proposed vnto thee for imitation; when risinge from the table, where he sat with his disciples, hee would be pleased to wash their feete: O sweete IESVS, what is it that thou doest? O sweet IESVS, why doth thy mightie Maiestie thus diminish it selfe? O my soule, what wouldest thou haue thought to see God tumblinge at the feete of men, and prostrate before IVDAS? O barbarous and cruel man, could not so great humilitie molifie thy

thy heart? was not so great bountie and sweetnes able to penetrate thy entrals, and to reclaime thee from thy intended mischeife? can it be that thou determinest to sell this meeke lambe for so small a price? nay if it be so, how couldest thou yet endure to behold so rare an example? I wonder it did not wound thy guiltie soule with compunction for thy greuious crime? O delicate hands, howe could you touch so filthie, fordid, and with sinne contaminated feete? O pure and vnspotted hands, howe could you endure to wash those feete, that were fouled with goinge and cominge to make a sale of your precious blood? O thrice happie Apostles, did you not tremble and stand amazed at the sight of so great humilitie? What dost thou doe PETER? canst thou permitt the Lord of Maiestie to wash thy feete? S. PETER wholly astonished with the admiration of this spectacle, when he sawe our blessed Sauiour fallinge downe at his feete, cryed out: *Domine tu mihi lauas pedes?* Lord doest thou wash my feete? what, art not thou the Sonne of the euer-liuinge God? art not thou the creatour of the whole world, the beutie of heauen, the Paradise of Angels, redeemer of mankind, splendour

of thy Fathers glorie, most deepe fountaine of the eternall wisdome? and doest thou wash my feet? howe cometh it to passe, that thou Lord of so great maiestic and glorie shouldest thus debase thy selfe to so vile a seruice?

Thē cōsider, howe he washed all his disciples feet one by one, and after washinge, wiped them with a linnen cloath wherewith he was girded, open the eies of thy mind to behold in these misteries a representation of our redemption. This linnen cloath so wiped their feet, that all the dirt which was vpon their feet did sticke on the linnen cloath: not without misterie.

For what more foule then mā conceiued in sinne? What more pure thē CHRIST conceiued by the operation of the holy Ghost? *Dilectus meus candidus & rubicundus electus ex milibus*: My beloued saith the spouse in the canticles is white and rudly chosen of thousands. Yet not withstandinge most pure, most beutifull CHRIST tooke vnto himselfe all the spots of our soules: frō which that he might clēse vs (as you may see him vpo the Crosse) he would be pleased to defile himselfe with the filth of our impuritie. Consider lastly with what words our Blessed Sauieur closed vp

this

Cont. 5.

this humble action: *Exemplum dedi vobis v̄ quem admodum ego feci vobis, ita & vos faciat*: I haue giuen you an example that as I haue done to you, you may doe the like. Which words doe not only pertaine to this present action, and example of humilitie: but likewise to all the actions of CHRIST through-outhis wholl life, vvhich is a most absolute and perfect rule for vs to square our actions by, especially of humilitie, which is here to life represented vnto vs.

Of the institution of the blessed  
Sacrament.

HE that desireth to comprehend any thinge of this noble misterie, must certainly thinke, that no tounge is able to exprefsthat immense loue, and ardent affection vvhervvith our blessed Sauieur vvas inflamed tovwards his holy Church and all faithfull soules, in institutinge this stupendious misterie. For vvhē this bridegrome determined to depart out of this mortall life, and to leaue the Church his beloued spouse; least this is departure should be any occasion to her of forgettinge her redeemer; he gaue her this Sacrament vvhē he himselfe is present, as a pledge and memoriall of his perpetuall loue.

Then

The cause  
vvby  
Christ in-  
stituted  
this Sa-  
crament.

The first.

*The second* Then feinge he was to be longe absent; least his spouse should remaine solitarie alone, he, for her consolation, would leaue himselfe for her companion in this holy Sacrament.

*The third.* When our blessed Sauour was to suffer death for the redemption of his spouse, to enrich her with his most pretious blood, and to purge her from sinnes: least she should be defrauded of so great a treasure, he would giue her a key in this Sacrament wherby she might at her pleasure enioy these riches: for as S. CHRYSOSTOME saith, we must thinke as often as we come to this Sacrament we put our mouth to the bleeding side of CHRIST, and from thence drinke his most precious blood whose merits we participate.

*The fourth* More-ouer this celestiall bridgrome, did desire to be tenderly beloued of his spouse, and for this cause would leaue her this mysticall meat, consecrated with most efficacious words, and therein so great vertue, that whosoever receiues it worthily shall presently be strooke with the darts of loue.

*The fifth.* He would likewise bestowe vpon his spouse some sure pledge therby to make her secure of the certaine succession of future glorie, that in hope of so great a good, he

he might temper the laborious difficultie and make the tedious bitternes of this present life, to be more tollerable, wherfore that the spouse might certainly beleue, that she shall at length attaine to these vnspeakable goods, he hath giuen her for a pawne, this inestimable treasure, vvhich is as much vworth as that vvhich is expected hereafter, that she should not doubt but that God vvill giue her himselfe in glorie vvhere he liueth in spirit, that vvould be pleased to giue her himselfe in this vale of teares, vvhere he liueth in flesh.

He vvould more-ouer vvhen he dyed *The sixth.* make his last vvill and testament, vvherin he left to his spouse a singular manna to cure all her infirmities, a gift then vvhich, nothinge can be more soueraigne, nothinge more pretious, seeing the deity it selfe is therein contained.

Lastly, he desired to feede our soules *The seventh.* with some heauenly foode, feinge they need no lesse nourishment that they might liue spiritually, then the body needeth corporall sustinence that she might liue corporally. Wherfore this spirituall provision whē he had diligently examined and felt

felt the pulse of our fragilitie . instituted this holy Sacrament which he exhibited vnto vs vnder the species or forme of bread, that he might declare what effect it should worke in vs, that is to say, that it is as necessarie for our soules, as bread for the bodie.

*A Meditation for Truesday.*

**T**His day thou shalt meditate of the prayer CHRIST made in the garden, the methode therof, and the contumelies he suffered in the howse of ANNAS.

Consider therefore, howe CHRIST our Lord, after the consummation of his mysticall body with his disciples, before he entred into the tragedie of his passion, went to make his prayer vpon the mount Oliuet, wherby he would instruct vs, that in all aduersities and tribulations of this present life, we fly to prayer, as to a holy anchore; the power of which is so great, that it either beateth back the forces of tribulations, or (which is of greater excellencie) ministreth sufficient strength to endure them, with a constant and willinge mind.

He tooke for companions in his iourney of his disciples, whome he loued aboute

aboute the rest, S. PETER, S. JAMES, and S. IOHN. Which as they were eie-witnesses of his transfiguration, so likewise they should be present in his agonie, to behold him for the loue of man now transformed into a farr more different shape; then he was, when he manifested himselfe vnto them, in a glorious and glitteringe forme.

That also he might open vnto them, his inward greife, to be much greater then appeared outwardly. He saith vnto them: *Tristis est anima mea vsque ad mortem. Sustinete hic & vigilate mecum:* My soule is heauy vnto death. Stay heere and vwatch vwith me. O vvordes full of compassion! Then departinge from his disciples a stones cast, vwith great submission and reuerence he praied his Father: *Pater si fieri potest transeat à me Calix iste, verumtamen non mea voluntas sed tua fiat:* Father if it be possible let this Chalice passe from me, but not my vvill, but thine be done. Which prayer vvhen he had repeated thrice, he fell into such an agonie, that he sweate drops of blood, trickling downe the earth, from his precious body.

Consider that, partly the foreseeinge of the most vnspcakable torments that euer any mortall man suffered, prepared for his most

most tender body : partly the distinct representatiō of the sins of the whole world, for the expiating of which he was nowe to suffer death vpon the Crosse : partly the remembrance of the ingratitude of many, which would not esteeme , or reape any profit from this great benefitt, strock such a deepe impressiō into his soule , that it filled it with sad and incredible anxiety, so troubled his senses and tender flesh, that all the elements of his body beeing weakened, the opened pores on euery side swett out drops of blood. If the flesh, which properly suffered not this anguish, but only through a simple immagination, was thus afflicted, what did his soule feale ; to whome properly these sorrowes did appertaine ?

His prayer beeing ended, that counterfeit freind of CHRIST *Iudas* the traitour, came attended with a hellish boord; he I say which renounced his apostleship, to be head and Captaine of a troope of hell-hounds, behold in the fore-front of that wicked multitude, impudently cominge to his master whome before he had solde, betraying him with a kisse of peace and freindship.

In that hower saied IESVS to the company, which came to apprehend him:

YOH

You haue come out as to a theefe to apprehend me with swardes and staues ? I saie euery day with you teachinge in the temple, and you laied not hould on me. But this is your horrer and the power of darkenes.

This misterie is worthy of admiration, for what thinge can be more admirable and stupendious, then to see the only begotten Sonne of God, not only in the forme of sinfull man, but in the shape of a condemned man : *Hac est hora vestra, & potestas tenebrarum* : This is your hower and the power of darkenes. From which wordes, is gathered that this innocēt lambe, was left to the diabolicall cruelty of the princes of darkenes, who by their vice-generentes and ministers powred all the malice and mischeife they were able to conceiue against him. Consider, how much for thy sake the supreme Maiestic of God is humbled, to endure all the extremite of tormentes that euer any suffered in this present life, not to die for his owne faults but for thy sins, but he did vndergoe this of his owne accord, to free thee from the power of Sattan.

He had skatce spoken these wordes, when that wholl rabble of hunger-starued wolues, gapinge after thoir prey, rushed vpon this meeke and innocent lambe, ha-

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linge,

linge, tearinge and afflictinge him with as much cruelty as euer they could. O barbarous and inhumane proceedinges? ô cruell and sauage blowes, contumelious violences, wherwith they tormented him? they insulted after a horred manner no otherwise, thē conquerers retourne loaden with spoiles after they haue put to flight their enemies, or hunters when they haue caught their prey. The handes which a little before were exercised in workinge miracles, they were nowe bound with ropes so cruelly, that they rased the skin, and besmeared them with blood. Thus they led him through the publick streetes of *Ierusalem*, followinge him with contumelies and blowes: behould him in this iournie goinge alone, left by all his disciples, compassed with a multitude of his enemies, forced to make such hast, that he was wholly out of breath, his colour changed, his face blushing, and his wholl body weakened and wearied by reason of the intollerable present difficultie.

Although our blessed Sauour was barbarously and most cruelly handled by that blood-sucking multitude: yet neuer the les thou mightst haue seene in his countenance a pleasant sweetnes, in his eyes a comely grauitie, in his manners a diuine

uine grace, which all the torments of the wholl world could not so much as diminish in the least degree.

After this goe with our blessed Sauour into the house of *ANNA*s the high Priest, that there thou maiest take notice what fauour he reaped for his mild answer, when *ANNA*s examined him of his, and his disciples doctrine: which vvas, that one of the Officers gaue him a cruell blowe vpon his cheeke sayinge: *Sic respondes Pontifici?* Doest thou answer the high Priest so? to him *CHRIST* replied: *Si male locutus sum, testimonium perhibe de malo: Ioan. 18. si autem bene, quid me caedis?* If I haue spoken euill bringe testimony of it, but if vvel, vwhy doest thou beate me?

Behould, ô my soule, not only the mild answer, but the print of the Officers hand in his tender cheeke, his countenance notwithstandinge quiet and amiable, not a vvhitt moued at the shame of so great an affront, because he inwardly thought so loue and humbly of himselfe, that he had tourned the other side vwithout delay, if the rascald had desired it.

*A Meditation for Wednesday.*

**T** His day thou shalt consider, how **CHRIST** our Lord was offered vp to **CAYPHAS** the high Priest: what torments he endured there all that night: how **S. PETER** denied him: and last of all how cruelly he was scourged.

Consider first of all, how he was led from the house of **ANNAS** to **CAYPHAS** his house, it is worth thy paines to followe him thether. For there thou shalt see the mighty sun of iustice ecclipsed: there thou shalt behould, the diuine face vpon which the Angels themselues delight to gaze, to be deformed with the filthy spittings of the Iewes. For our blessed Saviour standinge in the midst of them, was conuerted by the high Priest in the name of his Father, to speake out, what he was. He answered as befeeming himselfe: but they who were vnworthy of such an answer, blinded with the splendour of this great light, like mad dogges rushed vpon him, vomiting vp the bitter gale of their wholl malice against him.

They began whole troupes of them to assault him, to beate and kick him, they spit vpon

vpon his diuine face, and threwe the verie snout of their filthy noses vpon it. Others hood-winked his eies with a dirty linnen cloath, smiteinge him vpon the cheeke, and would in mokerie haue him prophecy who it was that strooke him. O admirable and vnheard of patience, and humilitie of the only begotten Sonne of God. O the face which the Angels of heauen doe contemplate with incredible ioy, besmeared with their sordid and filthy spit-tinges.

Men, when they spit, comonly tourne themselues to some foule place, some what remote from the sight of others. In this pallace was there no place found more contemptible therin to cast their spit and filthy dryuell, then the sacred face of **CHRIST IESVS**? O man that art but dust and ashes, canst thou choose but be stirred vp to humility, and contempt of thy selfe at so rare an example?

Consider more-ouer, what tormentes our blessed Saviour suffered all that night, how the Officers that kept him, that sleepe should not close his eies, afflicted him, derided the supreme Maiestie of God, and loaded him with many iniurious contumelies.



Waighe with thy selfe, my soule, that now thy spouse is made the white and mark, receiuing vpon him selfe all the dartes of iniurious contumelies that the mischeiuous Iewes could shute at him. O cruell night, o vnquiet night, in which thou blessed **I E S V S** couldest rest no more by reason of anguish and affliction, then others who tooke pleasure to torment thee. The night was ordained for the rest of all creatures, that the members and senses wearied with the labour of the day before, might then take some repose. But the wicked Soldiers that kept thee, spent it in tormentinge of thy senses, they did bind thy bodie, vexed thy soule, fettered thy hands and feete with manicles, buffeted thy cheekes, spit vpon thy face, blinded thine eyes, so that all thy senses when they should haue bene refreshed were afflicted.

O! howe farre did these mattins differ from those, which at the same time the blessed Angels did singe in heauen? they cried holy, holy: and the Iewes cried he is guiltie of death, crucifie, crucifie him. O angelicall spirits which vnderstood both cries, what could you imagine or thinke whē you sawe the inhumane crueltie wherwith he was handled in earth, whome in heauen you adored with so great

great submission and reuerence? did you not wonder to see him suffer all these extreame tormentes for to expiate the sins of those, who inflicted them vpon him? who hath euer heard of such immense charitie, that for this reason one should suffer death, to heale the greife and cure the woundes of his murtherers?

The fall of **S. P E T E R**, that great pillar, did not a little increase the anxietie of this tedious night; that he, whome he enteirely loued amongst the rest whome he chose to be present at his glorious transfiguration, to whome he committed the primacie of his holy Church, whome he ordained to be head and Prince of the Apostles, that he I say, should before his face, and in his presence denie him, not once but thrice, addinge blasphemies and oathes, that he knewe not the man. Tell me **P E T E R**, did this man seeme to thee so vngodly and wicked, that in future times thou didest feare, it would bee a disgrace vnto thee to confesse him now? didest thou not consider that thou didst first pronounce the sentence of condemnation against him, before he was adiudged by the high Preists, when thou didest not esteeme him so much as worthy of thy acknowledgment? couldest thou doe a grea-

ter iniury to CHRIST IESVS?

But CHRIST sorrowfull for this great fault of S. PETER turned himselfe, and cast his eies vpon him, that with his gracious countenance he might reduce this wandering sheepe into the sheepfold of his mercies. O admirable aspect, secret indeed, but full of signification, which S. PETER knewe right vvell, and vvell vnderstood of vwhat force and efficacy it vvas. The trovvinge of the cock had little auailed to his compunction and conuersiō, had not the countenance of CHRIST our Sauour bene adioyned. Whose eies did speake and vvorke that stupendious change, the certainty of vvhich, not only the flowing teares of S. PETER, but of our blessed Sauour himselfe did sufficient-ly testifie.

After all these iniuries consider, vwhat CHRIST did suffer, vwhen he vvas bound to be scourged at the pillar, for the iudge vwhen he saue, that he could not pacifie the fury of those infernall monsters, he thought good to aduise the, to beate him vwith rodde and vwhippes. Wherby his vvholl bodie might be torne, hopinge that vway to molifie their obstinate and obdurate hearts: that vwhen they saue him so torne and mangleed, they vwould cease fur-

further to desire his cruell death.

Enter novve my soule in spirit, into the house of PILATE, and haue teares in readines, for thou vvilt haue neede of them, if thou shalt diligently consider, vwhat vvas done there.

Behould hovv inhumanely these abiect and infamous roagues spoyled our blessed Sauour of his garmētes. Marke the humility of CHRIST, hovv he suffered himselfe to be stripped, not so much as opening his mouth, nor vtteringe any vvord against their iniurious behauour. See his sacred body bound to the pillar vwith many ropes, in such a fassion that on euery side they might haue come to torture him.

Consider, hovv our Lord of Angels stood alone in the midst of his cruell enemies, vwithout any Aduocates or Procuratours that vwould defend his cause, yea altogether vwithout any one man, vvho at least vvise a farr of, vwould so much as cōpassionate the bitternes of his tormētes. Doest thou not heare the noise of rodde and vwhippes wherwith they loaded, teared and rent the delicate fleshe of IESVS, addinge stroke vpo stroke, and vvound to vvound? doest thou not see his vvholl body in one short moment of time, vwith  
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the vehemency and often iterating the blowes, to be covered as it were with one vicer, his skin to be drawne from the flesh, and blood from his vvholl body, from the crowne of his head to the soles of his feete, to flowe downe vpon the earth? especially, is it not dreadfull for thee to behould the place betwixt the shoulders, vveruppon almost the vvholl force of all the blowes did light?

Consider how CHRIST the Sauour of the vvorlde, after that extreame cruelty of his tormentours, went vp and downe the Pallace all torne and cutt, seekinge and gathering vp his garmentes, not findinge one amongst those inhumane rascalls, that would shevv vnto him the least act of humanity, in vvasching or refreshing his vvoundes, or lend their hand to help him to putt on his cloaths. All these thinges are vvorthy of our diligent consideration, that therby vve might stirr vp our soules to due compassion of his miseries.



A Me-

*A Meditation for Thursday.*

**T**His day thou shalt meditate, how CHRIST vvas crowned vvith thornes, his presentation before all the people, his condemnation, his bringinge out to the place of execution, and last of all his caryinge of his Crosse.

The Spouse in the Canticles inuited vs to the consideratiō of these tormētes, when she saide: *Egredimini filie Sion & videte Regem* *Cast. 3.*

*SALOMONEM in Diademate, quo coronauit eum Mater sua in die desponsationis eius, & in die letitie cordis eius:* Goe forth yea daughters of Sion and see Kinge SALOMON in the Diademe vvhervvith his Mother hath crowned him, in the day of his desposinge, and in the day of the ioy of his heart.

What doest thou doe? vvhat doest thou thinke my soule? my tounge vvhy art thou silēt? O sweet Sauour whē I opē mine eies, and behould this sorrowfull spectacle, my heart is rēt vvith greife. What, Lord, vvere not thy former tormētes, imminēt death, and aboundāce of thy blood already shed, sufficient for the redēptiō of mankinde? but thou must yet be crowned vvith sharp thornes?

My soule that thou Maicst the better vnderstād this sadd spectacle, sett before thine eies our blessed Sauour, in his former beutie  
be

before he suffered these tormentes? Then behould him on the contrary in this miserable state. If in the first, thou doest rightly veiw him, thou shalt see him more beautifull then the sun. In his eies a comely grauity, in his speech a gracious facillity: in his actions singular modesty: in the gesture of his wholl body profound humility, ioyned with reuerent Maicsty.

Then after thou hast satiated thy soule with pleasure, in behoulding this rare peece of admirable perfection, then tourne thine eies againe, and looke vpon him, as he is in this present miserable state. Ridiculously cloathed in purple, bearinge in his hand a reede for a Kingely Sceptre, and vpon his head a Crowne of sharpe thornes, in steade of a regall Diademe, his eies were dimmed, his face pall and wan, fouled and couered with the filthy spittles of the Iewes: behould him within, and without: his heart consumed with greife: his body torne with woundes and blowes, forsaken of his disciples, hastened to vndergoe death of his enemies, mocked of the Soldiars: despised of the highe Priests: reiected as a wicked Kinge arrogantly assuming this title: vniustly accused, and destitute of all humane aide.

Doe

Doe not consider these thinges as done and past many yeares since, but imagine with thy selfe, that at this present they be in actinge before thy face; nor as an other mans sorrowes, but as thine owne afflictions, sett thy selfe in his place and coniecture what tormetes thou shouldest suffer, if thy head were boared to the skull and thy brain-pan pearced with sharp thornes? But what doe I say thornes, when thou canst scarce endure the prick of a small needle? howe great then was the paine, his tender head suffered, with this newe and vn-heard-of torment.

The Coronatiō of our blessed Sauour, with many mockes and scornes being ended the iudge produced him before the people, saying: *Ecco homo*: Behould the mā. If yea thirst after the death of the man, behould him scarce a heares bredth distāt from it, yea he is brought to that pass, that he deserueth rather commiseration, then your enuy, if yea feare that he will make himselfe a Kinge, behould he is so deformed, that he scarce reteineth the shape of a mā: doe yea feare any violence from these hands that are so straightly maniced? doe yea dreade any harme frō a mā that is cast into such a miserable and deiected state, whose body is so māgeled and weakened?

Coni

Cōsider, ô my soule, in what state thy Sauiour was, when the very iudge himselfe, did thinke with this aspect, would moue his bloody enemies to compassion: from vvhich vve may gather, vvhhat a miserable thinge it is, to see a Christian of such an obdurate heart, vvhich can or vwill not condole the passions of our Sauiour, vvhhen they vvere such, that the very iudge did thinke them sufficient, to mollifie the malice of his enemies. But P I L A T E seeinge vwith thees exceedinge tormentes, he could no vway temper or asvvenge their fury, vvent into his Pallace satt in the iudgment seat to pronounce the deffinitive sentēce against C H R I S T. Novve the Crosse vvas prepared at the dore and the fatall standard vvhich thretted ruine to our blessed Sauiour, vvas novve in a readines.

The sentence beinge pronounced vwith the addition of more tormentes, they loaded his vvearied shoulders vwith a heavy Crosse, to carry to the place of his execution.

But our meeke Lord, not only not reiected it, but out of that immense charity tovwards vs, vvhervvith he suffered for our sins, obediently and vwillingly embraced it.

Novv

Now the innocent I S A A C with his weake shoulders, supported the intollerable burthen of the Crosse to the place of sacrifice. The simple people and deuout women, followed him weepinge. For who was able to containe teares, to see the Lord and Kinge of Angels goinge thus on foote, with the extremity of tormentes, his knees quiueringe, his body stoopinge, his eies blinded, his face besmeared with blood, his head crowned with thornes, and his eares deafened with the noise of droomes and trumpetts?

Leaue a while, ô my soule, this horred spectacle, & with wateringe eies, with sobbes, and sighes goe to the blessed Virgine, and say to her. Lady of Angels, Queene of heauē, Gate of Paradise, Aduocate of the world, Sanctuary of sinners, Health of the iust, Ioy of the Saintes, Mistresse of vertue, Mirrour of purity, Symbol of chastity, Patterne of patience, and Rule of all perfection. O me miserable and vnfortunate, what haue I scene with the eies of faith? Howe could I liue to behould so inhumane vsage, interrupting sighes will not permitt me scarce to speake, howe I left thy only begottē Sōne, loadē vwith a mighty Crosse, to vvhich he vvas presently to be nayled, and carryinge it to the place of execution.

What

What heart, what minde, what soule, is able to comprehend the dolour, the blessed Virgine M A R I A then did suffer? her heart fainted, and a dead sweate with extreame anguish possessed her wholl body, and presently she had giuen vp the ghost, had not the diuine dispensation reserued her, till better times, for her greater merite, and more aboundant reward.

The blessed Virgine, with speed followeth the steps of her beloved Sonne, that ardent desire wherwith she was inflamed to see him, added vigour to her, of which sorrowe had bereaued her: she heard a farr of the noise of armes, the concourse of people, and the sound of trumpets, on euery side publishing the passion of C H R I S T, after that she sawe the glitteringe of launces and holbeards: in the way she found his footsteps sprinked with drops of blood, by which without any guid or leader she might easily find the way. Approachinge to her Sonne, she lifted vp her eies swelled with teares, to behold him, whome she esteemed dearer then her owne soule.

O what strife was there in the soule of this blessed Virgine, betwixt feare and loue? she did vehemently desire to see her Sonne, but on the other side she durst not

cast

cast her eies vpon him in this lamentable and afflicted state. At length when she drew neerer, these two celestiall lights beheld each other, their eies pearced each others soule, but greife enforced their tongues to silence, notwithstanding their heartes did mutually discourse, and the Sonne vnto the Mother said: Sweet Mother, why comest thou hether ony loue; my doue? thy sorrowe reneweth my miseries, and my tormētes crucifieth thy soule? retoutne; retourne againe into thy house. This defiled company of theeues and murtherers bescemeth not thy virginnall purity. These and the like words they inwardly vttered; all the way vntill they came to the place of execution.

*A Meditation for Fryday.*

**T**His day thou shalt meditate vpon the misterie of the Crosse, and the seauen wordes which C H R I S T spake vpon it: Rouze vp my soule and duely ponder this great mistery of the Crosse, which brought fourth the fruite of satisfiō, to expiate that great losse, which all mankind suffered by a tree.

Consider how, before our blessed Sauiour came to the Mount of *Caluarie* ( to make his death more ignominious ) his

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cruell

cruell tormenters stripped him of all his cloathes, except his coate, which was without seame, behould howe patiently this meeke lambe suffereth his garmentes to be taken from him, not so much as openinge his mouth or speakinge one worde against their barbarous dealinge. He permitted these things willingly, but with a great straine to modesty. He was stripped naked that we might receiue a better garment, to couer the nakednes of our sins, then that of **A D A M** the first parent of all mankind, made of the leaues of fig-trees to couer the nakednes of his body.

Some Doctours thinke that the crowne of thornes was taken of, to pull with more facilitie his vnseamed garment ouer his eares and after to be fastened on againe, which could not be without a vehement paine, the sharp thornes did a fresh wound his sacred head with vnspeakable torment. And surely this is not vnlike, seeing in the wholl time of his passion they spared him in nothinge; but the bitterest tormentes they could deuise, they heaped vpon him, especially when the Euangelist saith, they did to him whatsoeuer they would. This coate did so cleaue to the woundes of his sacred body, by reason of the congealed blood, that when the barbarous hangemen drewe

drewe it of with exceeding violence, they renewed againe the woundes of **I E S V S**, they pulled of with it many particles of flesh, so that the wholl body of **CHRIST**, in euery part fleyed and bloody, from the head to the foote seemed to be but one entire and continuat wound.

Weigh well with thy selfe (my soule) the immente goodnes and mercy of God, manifested in these tormentes, behould he that spreadeth the heauens with cloudes, vesteth the greene and pleasant feilds with flowers, and he that liberally bestoweth clothinge vpon euery creature, behould him I say starke naked. Consider what cold, this pretious body, beinge wounded, suffered, when they had not only spoyled him of his garmentes, but his very skin was not enteire, neither were his woundes bound vp, but exposed to the iniury of the aire.

If **S. P E T E R**, being well clothed could not ouercome the cold of the fore-passed night: What cold doest thou thinke this delicate body suffered being in euery place wounded and all naked?

Then consider how **CHRIST** was fastened to the Crosse, and what torment he suffered, when the sharp nayles pearced the most sensible parts of his tender body;

Weigh with thy selfe that the blessed Virgine, which beheld these thinges with her eyes, and hearing, the frequent blowes of the mallet, which they iterated in driuinge the nayles into the handes and feet of her Sonne, was not vn sensible, but the heart of the Mother was pearced with the handes and feete of the Sonne.

When CHRIST was made fast vpon the Crosse, presently they listid it vp, and put it into a hole there before prepared, behold how these wicked torterours of innocēt IESVS pricked forward with their owne malice, lett the heauy Crosse fall into the hole with such a violence, that it so much strained his body hanginge only by the nayles, and rent wider the woundes of his handes and feete.

Sweet Sauour cā there befound a heart so hard and steely, which is not molified at such a spectacle, when the very stones did cleaue in sunder, as sensible of thy cruell tormentes?

O Lord, the dolours of death compassed thee round about, the stormes and waues of the raginge sea enuironed thee on euery side. The waters entred into thy soule, thou didest descend to the deepe abyffe, where thou couldst find no footing. When thy heauenly Father did forsake

ake thee, Lord, what couldst thou expect thine enemies would doe? they cried out against thee, and thy freindes did wound thy heart, thy soule was sad and heauy, neither was there any that would cōfort thee.

Lord, from these vnheard-of tormētes, and aboundāt satisfactiō which thou hast made for my sins, I cannot but acknowledge with all humility the greiuiousnes of my heinous transgression, which were the occasions of all thy miseries. I see thee my King and God fastned vpon a wodden Crosse, with two yron nayles; thy pretious and tender flesh to be stretched without any manner of respite. If thou wouldest a little ease thy selfe vpon thy feete, the weight of thy wholl body enlargeth their woundes: if thou wouldest leaue the burthē to thy hāds, the weight of it doth likewise rend their woundes; thy sacred head could find no rest because thou hadest no other pillowe thē the sharpe crowne of thornes.

O virgine Mother howe willingly wouldest thou haue embraced him in thine armes, therō to ease and rest himselfe a little. But the armes of the Crosse would not permitt the, vpon which, if he would repose the sharp thornes strooke deeper into his head: the troubles of the Sonne were much augmented by the presence



of the Mother ; which no lesse crucified his soule then the Ievves his body to the Crosse.

O sweet I E S V, in one day thou didest carry a double crosse, the one vpon thy body, the other in thy soule, the one of passion, the other of compassion, the one pearced thy body vvith nayles of iron, the other thy soule vvith nayles of sorrowe. What tonge is able to expresse, vvhat thou didest suffer to see the anguish of thy Deare Mother? vvhose soule thou didest certainly knyve to be crucified together vvith thee? vvhen thou didst behould her heavy heart, pearced vvith the svword of sorrowe: vvhen vvith bloody eies thou didst looke vpon her beutifull face, pale and vvan: and didst heare the sightes of her dyinge soule, lamentinge that she could not dye. What didst thou suffer to see pure fountaines of tearés gushinge from her eies, and to heare her pittifull complaints she made in sorrowinge for thy sufferinges.

The consider the seauē vvordes vvich CHRIST spake vpon the Crosse, to his heauenly Father, sayinge: *Pater ignosce illis quia nesciunt quid faciunt*: Father forgiue them for they knovv not vvhat they doe. To the Theefe: This day they shalt be  
vvith

vvith me in Paradise; To his Mother: Woman behould thy Sonne. To the people he said: I thirst. And to God againe: My God, my God, vvhy hast thou forsaken me. *Consummatum est*: It is consummate. In to thy hands I commande my spirit.

Ruminate, my soule, vvith vvhat exceedinge charitie, he made intercession to his heauenly Father, for his enemies and persecutours. With vvhat piety and mercy he receiued the penitent Theefe into his fauour. With vvhat affection he committed his Mother to the protection of his beloved disciple: vvith vvhat ardour he testified himselfe vehemently to thirst after the saluation of mankind. With vvhat clamour he thundered out his prayer, expressinge to the diuine Maiestie the greiuiounes of his tribulations. Hovve perfectly he fulfilled the obedience, enioyned to hime by his heauenly Father. And lastly hovve he yealded his soule into his blessed handes.

Euery one of vvich vvordes doe afford vs a great deale of matter for our instruction. In the first, vve are taught, to loue our enemies: in the second, mercy towardes sinners: in the 3. piety towardes our parents: in the fourth, to thirst after our neighbours saluatiō: in the fift, vvhen

we are oppressed with tribulations, and seeminge as it were to be left of God, to fly to prayer: in the sixth, the vertue of obedience and perseuerance: in the seauenth, perfect resignation into the handes of God, which is the sume of all perfection.

*A Meditation for Saturday.*

**T**His day thou shalt meditate vpon the pearcinge of our blessed Sauours side with a speare: the takinge downe of **C H R I S T** from the Crosse: the lamentations of the women: and other thinges which did occur about his buriall.

First take notice, how that **C H R I S T**, after he gaue vp the ghost vpon the Crosse, his enemies much reioyced at his death. But yet there was not an end of their insatiate cruelty, but still their encreasinge malice raged against him beinge dead. They diuided and cast lotts for his garnētes, and with a speare pearced his pretious side.

O barbarous caitifes! o adamantine heartes! did you thinke those tormentes he suffered before his death were not sufficient, that you would not vouchsafe to spare him beinge dead? what madnes did possesse your soules? lift vp your eies and be-

behold his dead face, his eies sunck, his hanginge head, and his wholl body beinge wan and pale. Although your heartes be harder then adamant, yet let this pittifull aspect molifie them.

Behould the centurian stroock a lance into his sacred side vwith such violēce, that the very Crosse did tremble, out of whose side did gush aboundance of blood and water, for the redemption of all mankind. O riuer of paradise runinge forth to water the wholl earth! O pretious wound which rather the loue thou didest bare to vs sinfull men, then the enemies weapon did inflict! O gate of heauen, windowe of paradise, place of rest, tower of fortitude, sanctuary of the iust, nest of doves, tombe of pilgrimes, flourishinge bed of the spouse! Haile sacred wound, which pearcest deuout heartes, haile rose of incredible beauty, haile pretious stone of inestimable valour, haile dore, through which, lieth open a free passage to the heart of **C H R I S T**, an argument of his loue, and pledge of eternal felicity.

Consider that in the eueninge, **I O S E P H** and **N I C O D E M V S** came with ladders to loose and take downe the body of our Sauour: but the blessed Virgine after all these tormentes, perceiuinge her  
Son-

Sonne to be taken from the Crosse, and disposed for the graue, she tooke him whē he was let downe, in her armes, humbly beseeching that holy company, that they would suffer her to come nere his body, and to bestowe her last kisse and embracings vpon him, which vpon the Crosse she could not doe. Which they would not, nor could deny. For if her freindshaddepriued her of him dead, which her enemies did her of him liuinge, they had redoubled the anguish of her soule.

When she sawe her Sonne in this case, what greife, what dolours can we imagine she then did suffer? Angels of peace come and lament with this blessed Virgine, lament heauen, lament starres, lament all creatures of the vworld. She embraced the mangled body of her beloued Sonne, she hugged him in her armes (for loue administred this strength) she thrust her face amongst the thornes to come to kisse his mouth, vvhery she vvounded her face vvith the sharp pricks vvich she vvashed vvith flowing teares;

O sweet Mother, is this thy beloued Sonne? is this he vvhome thou didest conceiue vvith great glorie, and bringe fourth vvith great ioy? is this that bright mirroure in vvich thou vvert vvont to see thy selfe?  
all

all that were present did likewise mourne, the other MARIES, which were there mourned, the noble-men lamented, heauen and earth with all creatures mourned with the blessed Virgine.

That holy Euangelist lamented, who often embracing the body of his deare Master, said: O my good Lord and Master, who shall hereafter teach and instruct me? with whome nowe shall I consult in doubtfull occasiōs? vpon whose lapp shall I now rest my selfe? who shall now reueale vnto me celestiaall secretes? what suddaine change is this? yester day I rested vpon thy sacred brest, where thou didst communicate to me the ioyes and glory of euerlastinge life, and nowe in recompence of that benefit I embrace thee dead in my armes? is this that countenance which I beheld glorious and transfigured vpon the mount of Thabor? is this that face which I sawe brighter and more glittering then the sun?

And that blessed sinner S. MARY MAGDALEN lamented, who often kissinge the feete of her Sauour, said: O the true light of my eyes, the only remedie and solace of my soule. If I sinne againe, who shall hereafter receiue me into fauour? who shall defend me from the calum-

linies of the Pharifics? O how altered are these fecte from those I washed with my teares? O beloued of my heart, why doe I not dye with thee? O life of my soule, how can I say, I loue thee, when I liuinge, see thee dead before me?

Thus this blessed cōpany did mourne, and lament, wateringe with abundant reares the body of I E S V S. The sepulchre beinge ready they spiced his holy body with sweet spices, they wrapped it vp in a fine linnen cloth, bound his head with a handkercher, laied it vpon a beere, carried it to the place of buriall and put it into a newe monument.

The monument was covered with a stone, and the face of M A R I E obscured with a cloud of sorrowe. When there againe she had her Sonne adue, she then began to be more and more sensible of her solitude. For then she sawe her selfe, to be deprivied of the greatest good. But her heart remained buried vvith her treasure in the graue.



*A Meditation for Sunday.*

**T**His day thou shalt consider and meditate of the descent of C H R I S T to *lymbus Patrum*: his resurrection: diuers apparitions to the blessed Virgine M A R I E; S. M A R I E M A G D A L E N E, and his other disciples: and last of all his glorious ascension into heauen.

Take notice therfore of the incredible ioy, the Fathers, vvhich vvere detained in *lymbus*, felt at ther cominge of the redeemer vvho came to free them from the darke prifon, vvherin they vvere shutt for many thousand yeares. What prayfes, vvhat giuinge of thankes did they render to him, vvho had brought them to the longe desired hauen of their saluation? they vvhich retourne from the east *Indies*, are vvōnt to say, that they thinke all their forepassed labours vvell bestovved, only for that ioy they finde, the first day of their arriuall into their country. If the banishment of a yeare or tvvo, and the tediousnes of a little trouble some iourny, can breed such ioy in men, vvhat vvill the absence of three or fovvre thousand yeares doe frō that pleasant and celestially country. What ioy therfore doe vve thinke, those holy Fathers had, vvhen they tooke possession of it?

Then

Then consider the excessiue ioy of the blessed Virgine, when she sawe her Sonne risen from death, when it is most certaine, and vndoubted, that she felt the greatest sorrowe and affliction at his ignominious death and passion that could be, her ioy must needs excell the rest, in his triumphat resurrectiō. How great doest thou thinke was her content and pleasure to see her Sonne, whome she greuously lamented before his death, liuinge, glorious, and attended with a ioyfull troop of holy Patriarches, whome he brought a longe with him? What said she? what did she? with what kisses did she salute him? with what affection did she embrace him? what pleasant riters of teares distilled from her eies? how earnestly did she desire to followe her Sonne, had it been permitted to her?

More-ouer take notice, of the ioy of the holy M A R I E S, particularly of her which stood weeping, at the Sepulcre of C H R I S T, then, when she sawe him whome her soule loued: without doubt she cast her selfe at his fecte, when she beheld him liuinge, whome she sought amongst the dead.

After his Mother, he therefore appeared to her, who loued him most ardently, and,  
about

about others, sought him most diligently and perseuerantly, to instruct vs that when we looke for God, we must seeke him with teares and diligence.

Consider that after this, he appeared to his disciples going vnto *EMMAUS*, in the habit of a Pilgrime; behould, how curteously he ioyned himselfe a companion to them: how familiarly he conuersed with them: how handomely he dissembled his person: and after, with what affection he manifested himselfe vnto them, and last of all how he left their tounge and lippes filled with the delightfull discourse of his Majesty. Let thy discourse and talke, be like these disciples, as they trauailed in the way, of the loue and passion of our blessed Saviour; and I dare be bould to say, that he will not deny vnto thee his sacred presence.

In the mystery of our blessed Saviours ascension, first consider that he deferred it for forty dayes, that in the meane time often appearinge to his disciples, he might instruct them, and with them discourse of the kingdome of heauen. For he would not forsake them by ascendinge into heauen, before he had disposed their mindes to ascende with him spiritually.

Hence

Hence vve may note, that those are often deprived of the corporall presence of **C H R I S T**, and of sensible deuotion, vvhich with the vvinges of contemplation fly vp to heauen and feare no danger. Wherin the diuine prouidence, vvhervvith it curbeth & gouerneth the elect, doth vvonderfully manifest it selfe, howe it strengthneth the vveake, exerciseth the stronge, giueth milke to little ones, prepareth stronger meat for great ones, comforteth some, afflicteth others, and to conclude accomodates himselfe to all accordinge to their severall degrees in their spirituall profitt. Wherfore he that is roborated by diuine comfort, ought therefore not to presume of him selfe, seeinge this sensible consolation, is but the meat for infirme ones, and a great signe of vveaknes: nor he that is exercised by affliction, ought therefore to be dejected, seeinge temptation is for the most part, a testimony of a valiant minde.

**C H R I S T** ascended vp to heauen, in the preséce of his disciples, that they might be vvitnesses of this mystery, of vvhich they vveré eie-beholders, none can giue better testimony of God almighties deedes, then he vvhich hath learned them by experience: vvherfore he that vvould certainly

tainly knowe, how good, howe sweet, and mercifull he is towardes his, and what is the force and efficacy of his diuine grace, loue, prouidence, and spirituall consolation: lett him aske those, which indeed haue had experience of them, for they and only they, will giue him the best instructions and satisfaction.

More-ouer **C H R I S T** would ascend, his disciples lookinge vpon him, that they might profecute him with their eies and spirit, that they might haue a cordiall feelinge of his departure: that in his absence, they might feare to remaine alone, and that they might the better dispose themselues to receiue his holy grace. The Prophet **H E L I S E V S**, when **H E** 4. Reg. 2. **L I A S** was to be taken and separated from him, desired that he would giue him his spirit, **H E L I A S** made answer: *Rem quidem difficilem postulasti, attamen si videris me, quando tollar à te, erit tibi quod petisti; Si autem non videris, non erit.* Thou hast asked a hard thing: neuer the lesse if thou see me when I shall be taken from thee, thou shalt haue what thou hast asked: but if thou see me not, thou shalt not haue it.

In like manner they shall be heires of the spirit of **C H R I S T**, whome loue  
G doth

doth cause to mourne, for his departure: to whome his absence doth seeme greuous, who earnestly whilst they liue in this banishment, desire his holy presence. Such a Sainct was he that saied: thou art gon my comfortour, without any care of me, at thy departure thou didest blesse thine, and I sawe it not; the Angels promised, that thou shouldest retourne againe, and I heard them not. Who is able to expresse or vnderstand the solitude, trouble, cries and teares of the blessed Virgine, of his beloved disciple, S. MARIE MAGDALEN, and the other Apostles: when they sawe CHRIST to be pulled from them, who together with him carried vp their affectionate heartes? and yet notwithstanding it is saied of them, that they returned with great ioy into *Hierusalem*: the same loue and affection which made them bewaile the visible losse of their beloved Lord and Master, did likewise cause that they congratulated each other; much reioycinge at his glory, for it is the nature of true loue, not so much to seeke the comodie of it selfe, as the honour and comodie of the person that is beloved.

Last of all to close vp this meditation, it is left to vs to consider, with what glory, with what ioy, this noble conquerour was brought

brought into that heauenly citty: what solemnities were then instituted in the glorious Paradise, howe magnificently was he entertained by those celestiall citizens? what a delightfull spectacle was it, to see men accompanied with Angels, to goe in procession, and to sett vpon those seates, which for many thousand yeares, were vacant. But a most rauishing: ioy it was, to behold, the sacred humanity of CHRIST IESVS, farr transcending all others, to sett at the right hand of his eternall Father.

All these thinges are worthy of thy attentie consideration, that thou maiest learne, that the labours thou doest vndergoe for the loue of God, are not spent in vaine, therefore he that humbled himselfe vnder all creatures, it was requisite that he should be exalted aboue all; that the louers of true glory may trace this path, they must expect if they desire to be aboue all, that first they be subiect to all, euen their inferiours.



## C H A P. V.

*Of six things necessary to  
prayer.*

**T**H E S E are the exercises and meditations ( Christian Reader ) wherwith euery day thou Maiest feed thy soule, which if thou doest rightly vse , thou wilt neuer want matter, to buesy thy minde deuoutly. But thou must note, that meditation, if it be well performed, ought to consist of six partes. Some of which goe before, others followe mentall prayer.

*six partes  
necessary  
for medi-  
tation.*

*Prepara-  
tion.*

First before we apply our selues to meditation, it is necessarie, that our minde and soule be diligently prepared to this holy exercice. As the stringes of an instrument, except they be before-hand well tuned, will neuer make a pleasant melody.

*Reading.*

After preparation ought to followe the readinge of some holy mystery, accordinge to the distribution of dayes in the weeke, which in younge beginners is cheifely necessary vntill with continuall vse

*of Meditation.*

101

vse and custome, matter of meditation offereth it selfe vnto their memories. Then insist vpon the matter to be meditated vpon. To meditation we must ioyned deuout and syncere giuinge of thanks to God for all his benefits: then a generall oblation of all the life of CHRIST, for recompence of any benefit, and our owne workes to the honour and glory of God. Last of all, petition, which is cheifely called prayer, wherin we desire all things necessarie for our owne saluation, of our neighbours, and the good of the wholl Church.

*Medita-  
tion.*

*Giuinge  
of thanks.*

*Oblation.*

*Petition.*

These six partes are required to mentall prayer, which besides other comodities they minister abundant matter of meditation, seeing they sett before vs diuers sortes of meates, that if one will not relish our spirituall tast, we may fall vpon another: if we be deficient in one; in another we may employ our mindes, and kindle our deuotion.

But in euery meditation, neither all these partes nor order is alwayes necessary: although, as I said before, to younge beginners, it is. That they should haue a certaine methode, accordinge to which they are to guide them selues, wherfore in that which hath, or shall be said, my intention



is not to sett downe a generall rule , or immutable perpetuall lawes , the violating of which should be a fault , but my meaning is, to introduce , and bring in younge beginners and nouices into the right way, and methode of meditation: which when they are once in vse , experience , but especially the holy Ghost will better informe them.



CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

*Of the preparation necessarie to prayer.*

**I**T will not be besides our purpose to handle all these partes severally, we will therefore first beginne with preparation which we did put first.

He therefore which goeth about to meditate , after he hath placed his body after a decent manner, either kneelinge, or standinge, or composinge himselfe in manner of a Crosse, or prostratinge himselfe vpon the ground, or sittinge, if infirmitie or necessitie doth so require, lett him first signe himselfe with the signe of the Crosse, then let him recollect the dispersed powers of his soule, especially the imagination , and sequester it from all temporall and transitorie things. Lett him eleuate his vnderstandinge to God , consideringe his diuine presence, with that due reuerence and attention as is requisite , and lett him imagine God Almightye himselfe to be presente in his soule , as in verie deed hee is.

If it be the morninge meditation, after a generall act of contritiō, for his sins, let him make to God a generall confessiō: if in the eueninge let him examine his conscience, concerninge all his thoughtes, wordes, and workes, of that day: of the forgetfulnes of God Almightye his benefits, and of the sinnes of his former life, humbly prostratinge himselfe in the sight of the diuine Maiestie in whose presence, he now is after a particular māner, sayinge the wordes

Gen. 18.

of the Patriarch A B R A H A M: *Loquar ad Dominum meum, cum sim puluis & cinis:* Shall I speake to my Lord, seeinge I am but dust and ashes. And singinge this Psalm.

112.

*To thee haue I lifted vp mine eyes, vvhich dyvellest in the heauens. Behould as the eyes of seruantes, are on the handes of their masters. As the eyes of the handmaide on the handes of her mistresse: so are our eyes vnto our Lord God vntil he haue mercie on vs. Haue mercie on vs, o Lord, haue mercie on vs: Glorie be to the Father, &c.*

Cor. 2.

And because we are not able of our selues to thinke any good, but all our sufficiencie is from God, and because none can say Lord I E S V S, that is to say, call vpon the name of I E S V S, without the holy Ghost, to thee therefore, o holy Ghost, doe I turne my selfe, with teares imploringe thy

thy assistance: *Come holy Ghost send fourth from heauen the glisteringe beames of thy true light: Come Father of the poore, come giuer of reuwardes, come light of our heartes, sweet comforter, sweet guest of the soule, sweet refreshinge, rest in labour, temperature in heat, in mourninge a gratefull solace, o blessed light, replenish the heartes of the faithfull.* Then followeth the prayer. *Deus qui corda fidelium, &c.* These beinge said, he shall pray to God to bestowe vpon him his diuine grace, to assist at this holy exercise, with that attentio. due recollection, feare and reuerence, beseechinge so great a Maiestie, humbly beseechinge him, so to passe ouer this time of holy prayer, that he may retourne from thence fortified with new feruour, to execute what soeuer shall belonge to his holy seruice, for prayer which beareth not this fruite, is luke-warme, imperfect and of no moment before God.



## CHAP. VII.

## Of Readinge.

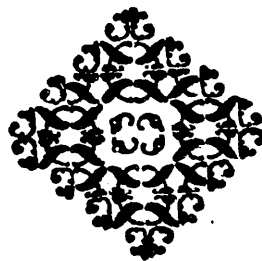
**A**FTER a due preparation, followeth readinge of those things which are to be meditated vpon. Which must not be too hasty but mature, serious and quiet, to which the vnderstandinge must not only be attentiuē, to vnderstand those things which are read: but also, and cheifely the will: that those things which are vnderstood may giue a spirituall gust and feelinge. When he falleth vpon any place, which much moueth his affection, lett him there pause a while, that in his heart it may cause a greater impressiō. He must also beware not to spend too much time in readinge therby to hinder meditation, it being a more fruitefull exercise, for-as-much as things attentiuely considered pearce more inwardly, and produce greater effects. If peradventure some time it happeneth the mind so to be disperced, that it cannot settle it selfe to prayer, then it is better to insitt a while longer in readinge, or to ioyne readinge to meditation, or after the readinge of one point

*vbat to  
doe vvhē  
the mind  
is distra-  
cted.*

point to pause vpon that a while, then after the same manner to proceed to the others. Although the vnderstandinge tyed to certaine wordes which are read, cannot so freely be carried into diuerse affections, as when it is free from this bond.

It is oftentimes very profitable for a man to vse some violence to himselfe, to expell his vaine and triflinge fancies after the example of the Patriarch IACOB, manfully to wrastle against them, perseueringe vnto the end, after which fight, the victorie beinge obtained, God doth for the most part, giue greater deuotion, or more pure contemplation, or some other supernaturall gift, which he neuer denieth, to those who faithfully fight in his cause.

*In put-  
ting out  
of vnpur-  
suable  
thoughts  
violence  
is to be  
vsed*



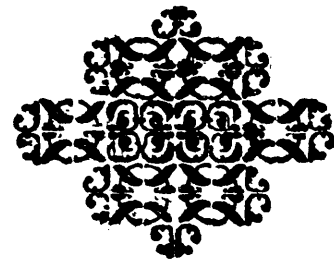
## CHAP. VIII.

*Of Meditation.*

**A**FTER readinge followeth meditation. Which is some times of such things as can be represented to our imaginatiō: as the life and passion of our blessed Sauour: the latter iudgment, hell, and the Kingedome of heauen. Sometimes of such things as are subiect rather to the vnderstandinge, then imagination, as the consideration of God Almightyes benefits, his bounty, clemency and other perfectiōs which are in God.

These meditations are called, the one intellectuall, the other imaginarie. Both which in these exercises are to be vsed after a different manner, as occasion requireth. When the meditatiō is imaginarie, so that the thinge meditated vpon, hath, or euer had, any actuall existance or beinge, vve must so frame and represent it to our fancie, as though vve vvere present in the same place, and saue vvith our eies those things, vvich there vvere done. This representation vvill make the consideration of

of these things, more viuacious, and cause a greater impressiō in our soules. For if our imaginatiō can comprehend wholl citties and countryes, with lesse difficulty, can it comprehend one mysterie. This helpeth much to the recollection of the minde: this will retaine the same busied in it selfe, as a bee in the hyue, where she worketh and disposeth all things diligently. But in these things a moderatiō must be vsed, for to run with a violent imagination to *Hierusalem*, to frame to the fancie those things which are to be meditated there, doth oftentimes hurt the head. Wherefore it is good to abstaine from immoderate imaginations, least nature oppressed with too violent apprehensions, becomes infirme and weake.



## CHAP. IX.

*Of giuinge of thanks.*

**A**FTER meditation followeth giuinge of thanks, the occasion of which must be taken from the matter meditated vpon; for example if the meditation be of the passion of our Sauour, we must giue thanks vnto him that, he hath redeemed vs from so great tormentes. If of sinnes: that, with longanimity he hath expected vs to doe penance. If of the miseries of this life: that he hath preserved vs from the greatest part of them. If of death: that hether to he hath defended vs from the perills of sodaine death, and hath fauourably granted vs time of penance. If of the glory of Paradise; that he hath created vs to that end, that after the stormes and troubles of this present life, we should enioy eternall felicity, after this manner, we are to proceed in other meditations,

To

To these benefits, we may ioyne the others which we handled before, to witt, the benefits of our creation, conseruation, redemption and vocation. As much as in vs lieth, lett vs giue him thanks that he hath created vs after his owne image and likenes, that he hath giuen vs a memorie to remember him, an vnderstandinge to know him, and a will to loue him. That he hath comitted vs to the custodie of Angels, that by the help of our Angel Guardian, he hath exempted vs from many daungers, preserved vs from many mortall sinns, defended vs from death and malice of the deuill, while we were in this case (which was no lesse, then to free vs from euerlastinge death, to which by sinn we were obnoxious.) That he would vouchsafe to assume our nature vpon him, and for our sakes suffer a most ignominious death. That we were borne of Christian parentes; that we were regenerated by Baptisme: that in this present life he hath promised grace, and vnspeakable glory in the world to come: that he hath adopted vs for his Sonnes: that in the Sacrament of confirmation, he hath fortified vs with stronge weapons to fight against the world, the

the flesh, and the deuill; that he hath giuen himselfe to vs in the Sacrament of the aulter: that he hath left vnto vs the Sacramēt of penance, to recouer that grace which was lost by mortall sin. That he hath visited vs dayly with good and holy inspirations: that he hath giuen vs grace to perseuer in holy and pious exercises.

After the same methode we must proceed in accountinge other God Almightyes benefites, as well generall as particular, and for all publicke or priuate, manifest or secret, giue him thankes: and we must inuite all creatures celestially and terrestially to beare vs company in this holy exercise: singing the songe of the three children:

*Dan: 3.* *Benedicite omnia opera Domini Domino: laudate & superexaltate eum in sacula, &c.* And the Psalme: *Benedic anima mea Domino: & omnia que intra me sunt, nomini sancto eius: Benedic anima mea Domino: & uoli obliuisci omnes retributiones eius. Qui propitiatur omnibus iniquitatibus tuis: qui sanat omnes infirmitates tuas. Qui redimit de interitu vitam tuam: qui coronat te in misericordia & miserationibus.*

My soule blesse thou our Lord: and all thinges, that are with in me, his holie name. My soule blesse thou our Lord: and forget not all his retributions. Who is propitious to all thine iniquities: who healeth all

all thine infirmities. Who redeemeth thy life from deadly falling: who crowneth thee in mercie and commiserations.

## CHAP. X.

### Of Oblation.

**C**ORDIALl thakes beinge giuen to God, presently the heart breaketh naturally into that affection, which the Kingly Prophet DAVID felt in himselfe when he said: *Quid retribuam Psal. 115. Domino: pro omnibus que retribuit mihi?* What shall I render to our Lord: for al thinges that he hath rendred to me? Which desire we shall in some sort satisfie, if we offer to God whatsoeuer we haue. First therefore we must offer to God our selues, for his perpetuall seruātes, wholly resigninge our selues to his holy will, howsoeuer he shall please to dispose of vs. We must likewise direct, all our thoughtes, wordes and workes, whatsoeuer we shall doe or suffer, to the supreme honour and glorie of his sacred Name. Then we must offer to God the Father, all the merits of his only be-

H gotten

gotten Sonne, all the labours and sorrowes he did vndergoe in this miserable world, to fulfill the will of his heauenly Father, beginninge from his natiuitie, and hard manger, to his contumelious crucifyinge and giuinge vp the ghost: for as much as these are all the goods and meanes, wherof in the newe Testamēt, he hath left vs heires; wherfore, as that is no lesse our owne, which is giuen vs freely, then that we get with our industrie: so the meritts of CHRIST, which he hath freely bestowed vpon vs, are no lesse our owne, then if we had got them with our sweat and labour.

Hence euery man may offer this sacred oblation, as the first, numbringe one by one all the labours and vertues of the life of CHRIST, his obedience, patience, humilitie, charitie, and his other vertues, seeinge these are the most excellent of all oblations, that we can offer to God.



CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Of Petition.

**T**HIS noble oblation beinge well performed, we may securely and confidently proceed to the askinge of any gifts and graces. First therefore God Almightye is to be prayed vnto, with inflamed charitie and ardent Zeale of his diuine honour, for the conuersion of all nations, that all people may be illuminated with the knowledge of him, prayinge and adoringe him as the only true and liuinge God. To this end from the bottome of our heartes we may vtter the wordes of the Kingely Prophet: *Confiteantur tibi populi Deus: confiteantur tibi populi omnes: Let people, ô God, confesse to thee: let all people confesse to thee.* Psal. 66.

Then we must pray to God for the Prelates of the Church, the supreme Pastour, Cardinalls, Archbishops, Bishops and other Prelates, that he would be pleased so to gouerne and illuminate them with the light of his heauenly grace, that they may be able to bringe all men to the knowledge and obedience of their creatour.

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We must also pray to God for Kings and Princes (as S. PAUL admonisheth) and for all men placed in dignitie, that by their diligent care, their subiects may liue à quiet life, well instructed with honest manners, for this is gratefull to God, that willeth all should be saued, and come to the knowledge of his truth.

Then for all the members of his mysticall bodie, for the iust that he would be pleased to conserue them in their sanctitie. For sinners, to conuert them, from their wicked courses, to the amendment of their liues. For the dead, that he would free them from the expiatinge tormētes wherein they are deteined, and bringe them to their eternall rest.

We must pray to God, for the poore infirme captiues, band-slaues or others in whatsoeuer tribulation, that for the merits of his Deare Sonne, he would vouchsafe to help, and free them from all their miseries.

After we haue prayed for the good of our neighbours, let vs at length intreat for our owne necessities, which discretion will teach euery one in particular (if he be not altogether ignorant of himselfe) what they are. But that we may set doune a methode for beginners, we will lead them into  
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this path way. First therefore we must pray to God, that for the merits and passion of his only begotten Sonne; he would pardon our sins, giue vs grace to auoide them, and to expiate them with good workes worthy of penance; but especially to implore for help and assistance against those euill inclinations and vices to which we are most propence, layinge open to our heauenly phyfition all the woundes of our diseased foules, that with the oyntment of holy grace, he would heale them.

Then let vs aske, for the most excellent vertues wherein the wholl perfection of a Christian man consisteth, for example, faith, hope, charitie, feare, humilitie, patience, obedience, fortitude in aduersitie, pouertie of spirit, contempt of the world, true discretion, puritie of intention, and others like to these, which are placed in the supreme top of a spirituall buildinge. Faith is the prime roote and foundation of a Christian: hope is a staffe to defend vs from all tribulations of this present life: charitie the end of all perfection: feare of God, the beginnunge of true wisdom: humilitie is the Basis and ground-worke of all vertues: patience is the strongest armour against the fury of our enemies:



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obedience is the most gratefull oblation to God, wherein man offereth himselfe for a sacrifice, discretion is the eie of the soule, fortitude the hand therof, wherwith it bringeth all her workes vnto perfection: purity of intentiō directeth all her actions vnto God. We must after pray for other vertues, which may help vs forward in the way of perfection: as, sobriety in meate and drinke, moderation of the tongue, custody of the senses, modesty and composition of the outward mā, sweetnes in giuinge good example to our neighbours, rigour and seuerity towards our selues, and the like.

Last of all we must conclude this petition, with a feruent imploringe of the diuine loue, and heere to pause a while, so that the cheifest part of time be spent in an earnest desiringe of this grace and fauour, seinge in the diuine loue all our felicitie doth consist, to that end this prayer followinge will not be vnprofitable.

*A prayer for the obtaininge of diuine loue.*

**G**Rant I beseech thee, ô Lord, that I may loue thee with all my soule, with all my heart, with all my strength, ô my only hope, my perfect glorie, my refuge  
and

and solace. O my dearest of all freindes, sweet spouse, flourishinge spouse, sweeter then any hony. Delight of my heart, life of my soule, ioy of my spirit. O bright day of eternitie, cleare light of my bowels, paradise of my heart, originall of all my good, ô my cheifest strength, prepare, ô Lord, in my soule a delicious bed, that accordinge to thy promise, there thou maiest dwell, and make thy mansion. Mortifie in me whatsoeuer is displeasinge to thee, and make me a man accordinge to thine owne heart. Pearce the marrowe of my soule. Wound my heart with the dartes of deare affection, and inebriate me with the wine of loue.

When shall I perfectly please thee in all thinges? when shall I cast from me all thinges contrary to thee? when shall I be wholly thine? when shall I leaue to be mine owne? when shall nothinge liue in me, but what is thine? when shall I embrace thee with ardent affection? when wilt thou inflame, and consume me with the flames of loue? when wilt thou pearce and replenish me on euery side, with thy sweetnes? whē wilt thou lay open and manifest to my pouerty, that precious Kingdome which is within me, that is to say, thy sacred selfe with all thy riches? when

wilt thou vnite me perfectly vnto thee? when wilt thou transforme and swallowe me vp wholly in thee, that from thee I may neuer depart? when wilt thou remove from me all obstacles, which hinder me that am not one spirite with thee. O beloved of my soule! O delight of my heart! Looke downe vpon me and heare me, not for my owne merits, but out of thy infinite goodnes: instruct, illuminate, direct, and help me in all, and through all, that I neither speake or doe any thinge, but that which I shall knowe to be gratefull before thy sight.

O my God, my loue, my ioy, my pleasure, my fortresse and my life! why doest thou not help the poore and needy, imploringe thy assistance? thou which fillest heauē and earth, why doest thou suffer my heart to be empty? thou which cloathest the flowers and lilies of the feildes with beauty: thou which nourishest the birdes of the aire: thou which susteineest the least creature of the earth: why art thou vnmindfull of me, that forgetteth all thinges for the loue of thee. O immense goodnes! I had knowledge of thee too late, that I loued thee no sooner. O newe and ancient beauty! O miserable was my state when I liued without thy loue! O wretched was  
my

my condition, when I knewe thee not! ô intollerable blindnesse of my heart vwhen I sawv thee not! I sought thee farr abroad, vvhēthou vvert vwithin me. Yet at length, though late, I haue found thee, let not thy mercy suffer me, ô Lord, that euer I forsake or leaue thee againe.

And because to haue eies to see thee is one of the cheefest things that pleaseth thee, Lord, giue me the eies of a solitarie turtle, to contemplate thee, giue me chaste eies full of modestie: humble and amorous: sanctified and vweepinge: attent and discreet eies vvhich may vnderstand and performe thy vvill. Lord giue me grace to behold thee vvith such eies, as thou maiest looke vpon me againe, as thou didest vpon PETER, vwhen he denied thee, and didest moue him to bitter compunction for his sins. Looke vpon me as thou didest vpon the prodigall childe, vwhen thou didest runn to imbrace and kisse him: Or as vpon the Publican, not daring to lift vp his eies to heauen. Behold me vvith those eies that thou didest inuite MARIE MAGDALENE to penance, and to vvash thy feete vvith teares. Or vvith those eies vvhervvith the Spouse in the Canticles incited thee to her loue vwhen thou saydest: *Quam pulchra es amica Cant. 4. mea,*

*mea, quam pulchra es! oculi tui columbarum!*  
 How beautifull art thou my loue, how  
 beautifull art thou! thine eies as it were of  
 doves.

That my aspect be pleasinge, and that  
 the beautie of my soule be gratefull vnto  
 thee, doe thou I beseech thee bestow the  
 gift of vertues and graces vpon me, to  
 deck and trim my selfe, wherby I may liue  
 to glorifie thy holy name for euer and  
 euer.

O mercifull and holy Trinitie! Father,  
 Sonne, and holy Ghost, one only true  
 God, teach, direct and help me in all.  
 O Father omnipotent, I beseech thee by  
 the greatnes of thy immense povver, to  
 confirme and strengthen my memory in  
 thee only, and to replenish it with holy  
 and pious cogitations. O Sonne most  
 wise, illuminate my small vnderstandinge  
 with thy eternall wisdom, to know  
 thy euerlasting truth, and my ovne mi-  
 sery. O holy Ghost loue of the Father and  
 the Sonne, with thy incomprehensible  
 goodnes make my will conformable to  
 thy diuine pleasure, inflame it with such a  
 fire of thy holy loue, that no waters which  
 rise from the turbulent feare of euill sug-  
 gestions, may be able to extinguish it.  
 O holy Trinitie and one God, I would to  
 God

God I could doe nothinge else but prayse  
 and loue thee, and as much as all thy holy  
 Saintes. I would to God I had the loue of  
 all creatures in me alone, I would with a  
 willinge minde transferrand tourne it to the  
 loue of thee, although this were nothinge,  
 in respect of what thou deseruest. Only  
 thou thy selfe, canst worthily loue and  
 praise thy selfe. Because none else besides  
 thee, is able to vnderstand thy incompre-  
 hensible goodnes, and therefore the iust  
 poise of loue resideth only in thy sacred  
 brest.

O blessed Virgine Marie, Mother of  
 God, Queene of heauen, Lady of the  
 world, Mansion of the holy Ghost, Lilly  
 of purity, Rose of patience, Paradise of  
 pleasure, Mirrour of chastity, Vessell of  
 innocency, intercede for me miserable ba-  
 nished wretch, and bestowe vpon me a  
 portion of thy abundant charity.

O all yea Saintes of God, and yea angeli-  
 call Spirits, which burne with a vehement  
 affection of your Creatour, especially yea  
 Seraphins, who inflame both heauen and  
 earth with loue, doe not forsake my mis-  
 erable soule, but purifie it as you did the  
 lippes of Esay from all vice and vncleanes,  
 and set it on fire with the flames of your  
 ardent loue, that I may loue and seeke our  
 Lord

Lord God, resting and remaining in him  
for euer and euer. Amen.

## CHAP. XII.

### *Certaine documentes to be obserued about Meditation.*

**H**ERTHERTO we haue only set  
downe plentifull matter for me-  
ditation, which for the present is  
verie necessarie, because the greatest part  
of men, either neglect or disdain this  
exercise, because they want sufficient mat-  
ter to consider vpon; nowe we will briefly  
handle those things which pertain to  
the forme and methode of meditation, of  
which, though the holy Ghost be the  
principall master, neuer-the-lesse experien-  
ce teacheth vs, that certaine documētēs are  
likewise necessary, because the way to  
heauen is cragged and full of difficulties,  
wherfore ther is need of a guide, without  
which, many haue gone astray a longe  
time from the right path, or at leastwise,  
haue not attained to their desired end, so  
soon as they expected.

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### *The first Document.*

**T**HE first Documēt therfore is, that we  
doe not so adheare to those things,  
which aboue we haue digested into seue-  
rall pointes, and times, as that we should  
thinke it a fault, to fall vpon other things,  
wherin the minde may reape more aboun-  
dant fruit, for seeing deuotion is the end of  
all those exercises, that which cometh  
nearest to this scope, is alwayes to be ac-  
compted best. Which ought not lightly  
vpon euery occasion to be done, but with  
a cleare and manifest profit.

### *The second Document.*

**W**E must be wary of too many spe-  
culations in this exercise, and vse  
rather efficacious affections of the will,  
then curious discourses of the vnderstan-  
dinge: wherfore they goe not in the right  
vay that meditate of diuine mysteries, as  
though they were to preach them to the  
people in a sermon: which is rather to dissi-  
pate, then recollect the spirit. And to wan-  
der abroad, thē to be busied in their owne  
home. Therfore he that will meditate with  
fruit to his soule, must come to it, like an  
humble simple creature, bringinge rather  
awill

a will disposed to tast these holy mysteries profitably, then acrimony of vnderstandinge to discusse them learnedly. For this is proper to those who giue themselves to studdies, not to those who consecrate themselves vnto deuotion.

*The third Document.*

**I**N the precedent Document we declared, how the vnderstandinge is to be moderated and subiected to the will, now we will prefix some limits to the will, out of which she cannot straggle without a fault. That therefore she be not too immoderate in her exercise, we must knowe, that deuotion is neuer to be expressed with the violence of our armes, as some doe thinke, who with cōstrained sorrowe doe wringe out teares and commiseration, while they consider the tormentes of **CHRIST IESVS**: for this doth rather dry the heart, the make it capable of diuine visitations (as **CASSIANVS** doth excellently teach) more-ouer this extraordinarie force, doth often hurt the body, and by reason of the burthen, which this violēce bringeth with it, the mind is left so nauseous that it feareth to retourne againe to these exercises: when experiēce teacheth, that it is the cause of so  
much

much trouble, he therefore that will fruitfully meditate vpon the passion of **CHRIST**, let him not be too anxious for sensible cōmiseration, but let it suffice, that he exhibiteth himselfe present to his sufferings, beholdinge them with a simple and quiet eie, and consideringe them with a tender compassiue heart, rather disposed to entertaine that affection which God almighties mercy shall suggest, then that which shalbe wronge out with violence. Which when he hath done, let him not be solicitous nor sorrowfull, what other thinges God doth deny or will not giue.

*The fourth Document.*

**H**ENCE we may gather what attentio, is to be obserued in prayer, wherefore the heart must not be languishinge, remisse or deiected; but quicke, attentiu and eleuated to heavenly thinges. And as it is necessaric to come to God with such attention, eleuation of the minde, and abstraction from sensible thinges; so it is no lesse necessaric to temper sweetly this attention, that it be neither hurtfull to bodily health, nor impediment to extinguish deuotion. For when any be so intensiue to the matter they meditate vpon, without any respect to their infirme nature,

ture, doe oftentimes so dull their braines; that they be vnapt for other exercises. On the contrarie, there are some, to auoid this danger are so remisse and lasy in their attentio, that easily they suffer their mindes to be distracted with other idle thoughtes

These two extreames, that they may be both auoided, such moderatio is necessarie, that the head be not weakened with too violent attention, nor the thoughtes permitted carelesly to wander out of supine negligence, in which thinge, we must imitate a good rider vpon an vntovward horse, vvhich neither holdeth him in too hard, nor looseth the raines vpon his neck, but guideth him equaily, that he giueth not back, nor goeth forvard too speedily. So vve must striue in meditation that attention be moderate, diligently resistinge euill thoughtes, but not violent vvith anxietie.

We must note also, that, these things vve here speake of attention, are cheefly to be taken heed of in the beginnige of meditation: for it often happeneth, that, those vvhich are too violent in the beginnige, doe founder in the midst of meditation. As trauailers makinge too much speed in their settinge forth, are tired in the midst of their iourny.

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## The fifth Document.

**A**Mongst all documentes this is cheifly to be obserued, that when in meditation we cannot presently perceiue that sweetnes of deuotion we expect, not therefore to wax pusillanimous, or leaue of from the exercise begun, but patiently with longanimity expect the cominge of our lord: seeinge it be seemeth the excellency of the diuine Maiestie: the vility and basenes of mans condition, the importance of the busines we haue in hand, to stay a while before the gates of his sacred pallace: If he cometh presently after a little expectation, with many thanks let vs with gratitude entertaine this vnderferued fauour: If he maketh longer delaies, let vs humble our selues before him, and confesse that we doe not deserue this grace: If he vouchsafeth not to come at all, let vs bare it patiently with a quiete mind, and content our selues, that we haue offered our selues, with all we haue vnto him for a gratefull sacrifice: that we haue denied our owne proper wills, resigninge the vnto his Power: that we haue crucified all our inordinate appetites: that we haue fought against our passions and vices. And finally

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that we haue performed whatsoeuer was in our power to be done. And although we haue not worshiped him with sensible deuotion. Yet let it suffice vs, if that we haue worshiped him *in spirit and truth*, as he requireth.

Last of all, let vs perswade our selues, that this is the most dangerous and cheifest to be feared rocke of this present nauigation, and place, wher in the true and faithfull seruantes of God are tried, and distinguished from infidells, from which if we shall depart in safety, in all others, we shall haue a prosperous successe.

*The sixth Document.*

**T**His document not much differeth from the former, which not withstandinge is equally necessarie, and this it is, that the seruant of god must not content himselfe, that he hath felt a little sensible gust from meditation; as many doe, when they haue shed a little dry teare, or felt a little molifyinge of the heart, that they haue attained to the scope and end of this exercise.

But they are farr deceiued, for euen as to make the earth fruitfull one little shewer which

which alaieth the dust, is not sufficient, but it must haue a great deale of raine throughly soke into the rootes of the plantes, before it can giue any hopes of a fruitfull yeare: so the aboundance of celestiall waters, are necessarie to our soules for to make them bringe fourth the fruit of good workes. Wherefore we are not with out cause admonished by spirituall men, that we should spend as much time as possible we can in this holy exercise, and it is better to insitt some longe time together, then by fitts. For when the time is short, it wilbe almost all consumed, in quietinge the immagination, and recollecting the heart. and it often happeneth, that whilst we should reape the fruit of our former trouble, meditation is quite broke of.

Concerninge the prefixed time for meditation, it seemeth to me, what soeuer is lesse the two howers, or an hower and halfe, is to little for this exercise, because almost one hower is spent in tuninge the instrument of our soules, repressinge idle and vnprofitable thoughts, and recollectinge the minde from temporall thinges: and some time also is necessarie to spend in reapinge the fruit of our prayer in the latter end.

Although I cannot deny, but after some  
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pious action the mind is better disposed for meditation: for as dried wood quickly burneth, so the mind that is well disposed, is sooner kindled with this celestial fire.

The morninge also is the best time for meditation, because the mind is then most free from fancies, and therefore can with better facilitie apply it self to this holy exercise. But who by reason of the multiplicity of outward affaires, cannot spend so much time, yet at leastwise let them, with the poore widdowe in the ghospell, offerr vp to god the small mite of their sincere affection. And no doubt but he who provideth for all creatures accordinge to their severall necessities, will graciously accept it, if their culpable negligence doth not deserue the contrarie.



The

*The seauenth Document.*

THE seauenth document is, that he that is visited with diuine consolations in, or, out of prayer, ought to haue a special care to spend that time; aboue other, with fruite vnto his soule, for whilest this prosperous gale doth blowe, he will goe further in his iourney towards heauen in one hower, then other wise, he hath, or shall doe in many dayes. So did the holy Father S. FRANCIS doe of whom S. BONAVENTURE writeth that he had such a solicitous care of diuine visitations, that whensoever vpon the way he was recreated with them, he would either goe before, or stay behind his companion a while, vntill he had digested this diuine morsell sent vnto him from heauen. They which are negligent and carlesse to answere diuine visitations, are comonly chastised with this punishment from God, that when they seeke, they will hardly find them.



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*The eighth Document.*

**T**HE last Document and of greatest moment is, in this exercise of prayer we must ioyne meditation to contemplation, seeinge one is, as it were a ladder vnto the other: wherefore it is the part of meditation, with diligent attention to consider and ponderate celestially things, first one, then another, that at last some pious affection may be stirred vp in the soule, like him that with a steele striketh fire out of a flint: but it is the property of contemplation which followeth meditation, to enjoy this kindled fire, that is to say, to embrace that affection, vvhich vvith much labour he hath sought and found, in deep silence and tranquillitie of spirit, not vvith many discourses and speculations of the vnderstandinge, but vvith a pure simple relation and eie to veritie, hence a certaine doctour saith, that meditation doth discoure vvith labour and small profit, but contemplation vvithout any trouble, and vvith much fruit: the one doth seeke, and the other findeth: the one doth chewe, and the other eateth the meate: the one doth reason and consider, the other contemplateth those things she loues and tasteth, and in fine the one is  
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the meanes, the other is the end: the one is the way and motion, the other the tearme of the way and end of the action. From these things which we haue said, that rule or axiome is very frequent amongst spirituall Masters, which fewe of their scholars doe rightly vnderstand. That is, *sine adepto media omnia cessare*. The end beinge attained vnto, all meanes doe cease. For example, the mariner resteth when he hath ariued to his desired haue. So he that meditates, when by the meanes of meditation he shall come to the rest and sweet gust of contemplation, ought to leaue the cragged way of reasoninge and discoure, contentinge him selfe, with the memorie of god almightie alone, whome he may behold as present to his soule, and quietly enjoy that sweet affection, which he shall vouchsafe to bestowe vpon him, whether it be of loue, admiration, ioy, or the like, and the reason is, because the end of this busines consisteth rather in loue, and affection of the will, then in speculations of the vnderstandinge. When therefore the will hath captiuated the one, and attained to the other affection: all reasoninge and speculations of the vnderstandinge are to be left: that the soule may bend all her forces to it, without a confused wanderinge

to the actions of the other powers. Therefore a certaine doctour giueth this counsell to those who perceiue the selues to be inflamed with the fire of diuine loue, that they should quite abolish all other thoughtes and speculations, though neuer so sublime and subtile, not that they are euill, but because for the present they hinder a greater good. And this is no other, then after we haue come to the end, to leaue meditation for the loue of contemplation.

Which we may doe (to speake particularly of this matter) in the end of euery exercise (that is to say) after the petition of diuine loue, as aboue said: and that for too reasons, first because it is supposed that the labour of the finished exercise hath produced some fruite of deuotiō towards God almighty, as the wiseman saith, *melius est finis orationis, quam principium*. Better is the end of prayer, then the beginnunge. Secōdly it is expedient, that, after labour in prayer, the vnderstandinge rest a while, and recreate it selfe in the armes of contemplation.

Heere let euery one resist what focuer immaginations shall present them selues vnto his minde, let him still his vnderstandinge, let him fasten his memorie strongly  
vpon

vpon god, contideringe that he is placed in his holy presēce. But let him not adheare to any particular contemplation of God, but only content himselfe with that knowledge, which faith hath ministred vnto him: and to this let him add his will and affection, seeinge this is only that which embraceth God, and in which the wholl fruite of meditation consisteth. The weake vnderstandinge is little able to conceiue, or comprehend any thinge of God, but the will can loue him verie much.

Let him therefore rouze vp himselfe from tēporall thinges, and let him recollect himselfe with in himselfe (that is to say) to the centre of his soule, where is the liuely image of god, here let him harken attentiuely as though he heard God almightie speakinge from a high turret, or as though he held him fast being present in his soule: or as though there were no other persons in the world, besides God and him-selfe.

Nay I say more, let him quite forget him selfe, and those thinges which he doeth: for as one of the ancient holy Fathers saith, prayer is then euery way compleat, when he that prayeth doth not consider that he is before God in prayer. And this is to be done not only in the end of the exercise, but in the middest and in euerie

part of meditation. For as often at this spirituall sleepe shall sweetly oppresse any one (that is to say) when the vnderstandinge is drowned as it were in a sleepe, (but the will watchinge) let him quietly enioy this delicate meate as longe as it shall last.

But when it is digested, let him retourne againe to meditation, in which we must behaue our selues like a gardiner, who, when he wattereth a bedd of his garden, after he hath once sprinckled it with water expecteth a while, vntill it be drunke in, then sprinckleth againe, that at last it may throughly wett the earth, That it may become more fruitfull. But what the soule cast into this heauenly sleepe, and illuminated with the splendour of this eternall light, doth enioy! what facietie, what charitie, what internall peace! no tongue is able to expresse: this is that peace which exceedeth all vnderstandinge, this is that felicitie, a greater then which cannot be imagined in this vale of miserie: there are many so inflamed with this fire of diuine loue, that their interiours, at the verie memory of this blessed name without any meditation at all before, doe rest in ioy.

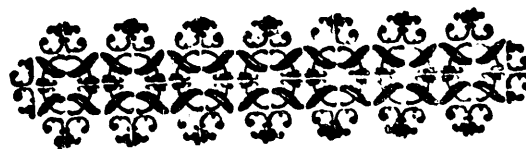
These need no more consideration or discourses, to loue god, then a mother needs

des motiues to loue her child, or the bride her husband. Others there are so absorped in God, not only in prayer, but also in outward busines, that they wholly forget the selues, and all creatures for the loue of him. neither are these effects of diuine loue to be admired, freinge worldly loue causeth often times greater matters in the mindes of men, that it makes them madd. What shall we attribute lesse efficacie to grace then vnto nature and sin? When therefore the soule shall feale this operation of diuine loue, in what part of prayer soeuer it happeneth, let him neuer refuse it, although he spend all the time of this exercise in it without any manner of consideration at all of that point, he purposed to meditate vpon (except he be specially obliged vnto it.) For as saint AVGVSTINE saith vocall prayer ought to be left, if it hurteth deuotion, so meditation ought to be differred if it hurteth contemplatiou. But as it is necessarie to leaue meditation for this affection, and to ascend from the lesser to the greater: so often times this contemplation is to be left for meditation, when it is so vehement, that the corporall health, receiue some damage therby. This oftentimes happeneth to those who taken with the pleasure of this diuine sweetnes, giue them selues

too indiscreetly to these exercises, and use them too immoderately, to whome (as a certaine Doctour saith) this will be the best remedy, that they desist from contemplation, turninge their mindes to some other good affection, as of compassion in meditatinge of the sufferings of our Saviour. Or about the sinns and miseries of this world, to exonerate the hearte, diuertinge it from that too much intension.



THE



THE SECOND PART.

OF  
**DEVOTION**  
 AND OF  
**THOSE THINGS**  
 WHICH THERVNTO  
 BELONGE.

CHAP. I.

*What is deuotion.*

**A**MONGST all the troublesome difficulties, to which they who frequent the exercises of prayer and meditation, are subiect, none is greater, then that which they suffer from the defect of deuotion, which often felt in prayer.

Deuotion  
maketh  
all thin-  
ges easy.

prayer. For if they haue this, nothinge is more sweet, nothinge more pleasant, nothinge more easie, then to insift to prayer and meditation. But if that be wantinge, nothinge more hard, nothinge more difficult, nothinge more burthenfome then to pray. Wherefore seeing we haue already spoken of prayer, meditation, and the methode to performe it. Nowe it will not be besides our purpose to treat of those thinges which partly promote, and partly hinder and extinguish deuotion in the mind of man. As also to lay open the temptations which are obuious to those who frequent these pious exercises, and last of all to annex some certaine documentes, vvhich may not a little auaille to the vvell performance of this busines. We vwill therefore beginne from the definition of deuotion: that it may manifestly appeare vvhata pretious margarite it is, for vvhich vve vvarr.

Deuotion, as S. THOMAS saith, is a vertue vvhich maketh a man prompt and readie to euerie vertuous deed, and stirringe him vp to doe vvell. vvhich definition euidently shevveth the necessitie and vtilitie of this vertue, as conteininge more in it, then any man can imagine.

For

For the better vnderstandinge of this, vve must knowve, that the cheifest impediment that hindereth vs from leadinge a vertuous life, is the corruption of humane nature, proceedinge from sinne, vvhich bringes vwith it a vehement inclination to vice, and a great difficultie to doe vvell; this make the vway of vertue cragged and troublesome, although in it selfe considered, nothinge in this vworld, is so svweet, so louely, so beautifull.

The diuine wisedome hath ordeined the help of deuotion, as a most convenient remedie to ouer-come this difficultie: for as the north wind dissipateth clouds, and maketh a cleare skey, so true deuotion expelleth from the mind, the tediousnes of this way, and maketh vs with alacritie prompt to pious actions. This vertue doth so farr forth obtaine the name of vertue, that likevvise it a speciall gift of the holy ghost; a heauenly devve, an assistance obtained by prayer, vvhose property is to remoue all difficulties happeninge in prayer and meditation: to expell tepiditie: to minister alacritie in the diuine seruice, to instruct the vnderstandinge: to roborate the vvill: to kindle in our heartes heauenly loue: to extinguish the flames of vnlawfull desires: to ingendre a hatred  
and

and loathing of sinne and all transitorie things: and last of all to him that possesseth it, to infuse a newe seruour, a newe spirit, a newe mind, and newe desires to doe well. For as SAMPSON as long as he had his haire, did excede all men in strength: but when that was cutt he was as weake as others. So the soule of euerie Christian recreated with the help of deuotiō, is stronge and valiant. But when it is deprivied of it, it becometh infirme and weake.

But aboue all the prayses, which can be heaped vpon this vertue, this is the cheifest, that although it be but one only vertue, yet it is a prick and motiue to all: they therefore that desire, to walke in a vertuous way must get this for a spur, for without it, he will neuer be able to rule his rebellious flesh.

Hence it manifestly appeareth, in what the true essence of deuotion doth consist, not in tendernes of heart, or abundance of consolations wherwith they which meditate are often recreated, except a prompt alacritie of the mind to doe well be therunto adioyned: especially seeinge it some times happeneth, the one to be found without the other, God almightie so disposinge for the triall of his seruantes. Though I can not denie. But that these consolations doe  
often

In what  
deuotion  
consisteth.

often proceed from deuotiō and promptitude of the minde to doe well, and on the contrarie, that true deuotion is not a little augmented by the same consolations and spirituall gusts. And therefore the seruantes of God may lawfully desire and aske the, not for the delight they bringe with them, but because they doe greatly increase deuotion which maketh vs with alacritie to apply our selues to vertuous actiōs, which the Kingly Prophet testifieth of himselfe sayinge: *Viam mandatorum tuorum cucurri, cum dilatasti cor meum*: I haue runne the wayes of thy commandementes when thou hast enlarged my heart, that is, when thou hast recreated me with the sweetnes of thy consolations which are the cause of this my readines.

Now let vs treat of the meanes, wherby this vertue is to be attained vnto, which will bringe no small profit with it, for seeinge it is the spurr to all other vertues, to set downe the meanes, wherby it is to be obtained, is no other thinge then to prescribe the meanes to get all other vertues.

K

CHAP.

## CHAP. II.

*Nine meanes or helpes vvhetherby this vertue of deuotion may be attained vnto, vwith the least difficultie.*

*Conti-  
nuance of  
exercise  
helpeth  
deuotion.*

**T**HE thinges which promote deuotion are many, of which we will handle a fewe.

First, it helpeth much deuotion: if those exercises be vnderaken with a generous resolution, ready to vndergoe what difficulty soeuer shall occur, for the obtayning of this pretious margarite. For it is certaine, that nothinge is excellent which is not difficult, of which kind is deuotion, especially in beginniges.

*Custodie  
of the  
heare.*

Secondly, a diligent custodie of the heart from euery vaine and vnprofitable cogitation, from affections, strange loue, and turbulent motions, doth much promote deuotion. For it is euident, that euery one of these, is no little hindrance, seeinge this vertue cheifly requireth a quiete heart, free from all inordinate affection, and so well composed as the stringes of a well tuned instrument.

Thirdly,

*of Meditation.*

Thirdly, custodie of the senses: especially the eies, tongue, and eares, seeinge by these the heart is much distracted. For those thinges which enter in through the eies and eares, doe straine the minde with diuers imaginatiōs, and cōsequētly disturbe and trouble the peace and tranquility of the soule. Wherefore one not without cause saied, that he that meditateth must be deafe, blind, and dumbe. For by how much lesse he wādereth abroad, with greater re-collection, will he reioyce at home.

*Custody  
of the  
senses.*

Forthly, solitude helpeth deuotion much, for it doth not only remoue the occasions of sinne, and take away the causes which cheifly disturb the heart and senses, but it maketh a solitary man, to rouze vp himselfe from temporall thinges, to be present to himselfe and conuerse incessantly with God. To which the opportunity of the place doth admonish, which admitteth no other societie.

*Solitude.*

Fifthly, the readinge of spirituall bookes doth not a little nourish deuotion, because it administreth matter of consideration, abstracteth the minde from all thinges created, stirreth vp deuotion, and causeth that a mā doth sooner adheare to the consideration of those thinges, which in readinge offered him a more pleasant

*Readinge  
of spiri-  
tuall  
bookes.*

K 2      tast,



tast, that, that wherwith the heart aboundeth may oftner occur to his memorie.

Conti-  
nuall me-  
mory of  
God.

Sixthly, continuall memory of God almighty, and dayly immagination of his sacred presence, that alwayes thou art in his sight, with a frequent vse of aspirations which S. AVGVSTINE calleth iaculatorie prayers. For these doe gaurd the palace of the mind, conseruinge deuotion in her feruour: that a man is alwayes willinge to pious actions, and ready to holy prayer: this document is one of the principall instrumentes of a spirituall life, and the only remedy for those, who haue neither time nor place with opportunity, to insit to longer prayer and meditation, and they which doe thus bestowe their labour to frequent aspirations, will in a short time profit much.

Perseuer-  
ance.

Seauenthy, perseuerance in good exercises, that so times and places be duely obserued, especially morninge and eueninge, as fittest times for prayer.

Corporall  
austeri-  
ties.

Eighthly, corporall abstinence and austerities doe much help deuotion: fastinge from meate: a frugall table: a hard bed: haire cloth: discipline, and the like. As they originally proceed frō deuotiō of the minde: so they doe not a little cherish, conserue and nourish the roote from whence they springe,

springe, which is deuotion.

Latt'y, workes of mercy are a great *Worker of mercy.* spur vnto deuotion, because they increase the confidence we haue to appeare before God, and to be presented before his sacred Maiettie: they doe accōpanie our prayers: and finally they merite that they be sooner heard of God, especially seeinge they proceed from a mercifull heart.



## C H A P. III.

*Nine impedimentes of deuotion.*

**A**S there be nine things which doe promote deuotion, so likewise there be nine impedimentes that doe hinder the same.

*Veniall  
sinns.*

The first impediment of deuotion is, sinnes not only mortall, but also veniall, for these although they doe not quite abolish charitie, yet at leastwise they diminish the seruour of it, and consequently make vs lesse apt vnto deuotion. Wherefore with all diligence they are to be auoided, not only for the euill they bringe with them, but also for the good which they hinder.

*Remorse  
of con-  
science.*

Secondly, remorse of conscience proceedinge from sins, when it is in extreames because it doth disquiete the minde, weakeneth the heade, and maketh a man vnfit for actes of vertue.

*Anxiety  
of heart.*

Thirdly, anxietie of heart and inordinate sadness, for with these, the delight of a good conscience and spirituall ioy of the inward minde, can hardly lute and agree.

Fourthly, too many cares which doe dis-

disquiete the mind, like the Egiptian pre-  
fects who did oppresse the children of *Cares of  
the mind.*

ISRAEL with too immoderate labours: nor will euer suffer them to take that spirituall repose, which they should haue often had in prayer. Yea at that time about others they disturbe the mind, endeavouring to seduce her from her spirituall exercise.

Fifthly, a multitude of affaires, which *Affaires.* take vp our whole time, suffocates the spirit, scarce leauinge for a man a moment to employ in Godalmightie his seruice.

Sixthly, delights and pleasures of the *Delights  
of the  
senses.* senses, for these make spirituall exercises vnfaoury, and a man vnworthy to be recreated with heauenly consolations, for as saint BERNARD saith, he is not worthy of the visitations of the holy ghost that seeketh after worldly solace.

Seauethly inordinate delighte in eatinge and drinkinge: especially longe and sumptuous suppers, which make a man vnapt to spirituall exercises. For when the body is oppressed with too much meate, the spirit cannot so freely cleuate it selfe to God. *Inordi-  
nate de-  
light in  
eatinge  
and drink-  
inge.*

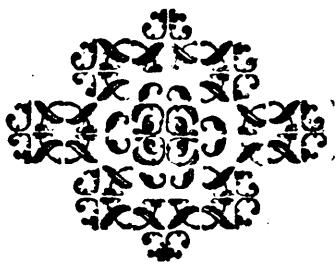
Eighthly curiositie of the senses and vnderstandinge, as to see sightes and heare *curiosity  
of the  
senses.* newe rumours, because these doe spend

pretious time, disturbe and ouerthrough the tranquillitie of the minde distractinge it with many impertinences, which can be no small hinderance to deuotion.

*Intermission of exercises.*

Lastly, an intermission of our wonted exercises, except when they are not omitted or differred for a pious cause or iust necessitie. For the spirit of deuotion is delicate: which when it is gone it hardly retourneth againe, at least with great difficultie. For as trees and plantes must be watered in due season otherwise they wither away and perish: so deuotion, except it be watred with the waters of holy meditation, doth easily vanish.

These thinges we haue set downe breifly, that they may be the better remembered, vse and experience of them will afford a longer explication.



CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

*Of the common temptations vvhich for the most part assault those, vvhho giue themselues to meditations: as also of the remedies against them.*

**N**OW let vs see with what temptations they which frequent, the exercise of prayer and meditation are molested: that we may provide conuenient remedies for them. Which be these.

1. The want of spirituall consolations.
2. A multitude of vnprofitable thoughtes.
3. Thoughtes of infidelitie and blasphemy.
4. Fancies in the night.
5. Sleepinesse and drowinesse.
6. Diffidence of goinge forward.
7. Too much presumption of their owne sanctitie.
8. Inordinate desire of learninge.
9. And indiscreet zeale.

These are the common temptations which doe trouble those which would leade a vertuous life.

of

Of the first temptation, and the remedie thereof.

What to doe in the time of drynesse of spirit.

**T**O him that wanteth spirituall cōsolations, this is the remedie, that therefore he omitteth not his customarie exercises of prayer, although they seeme vsfauourie and of no fruite, but let him set him selfe in the presence of God, cominge before him as guilty of many greuous sins, let him search diligently, the corners of his owne conscience, and consider whether or no through his owne default, he hath lost this grace, if so, let him beseech God almighty to pardon him for this sinne, admiringe the inestimable riches of his diuine patience in toleratinge vs so longe.

By this meanes he will reape no small fruite from his aridity of spirit, takinge from thence occasion of profounder humilitie when he considereth his owne malice and peruersnes in heapinge vp of sin, or of more ardent affection when he seeth God almighties goodnes in pardoninge the same. And although he enioyeth no pleasure at all in his exercises, let him not therefore abstaine from the continuation of them, for it is not alwayes necessary, that it should be sweet and fauourie to the present

sent tast, which wilbe hereafter profitable. Especially when it is often seen by experience that those who constantly perseuer in their intended exercises, not giuinge ouer in the time of this aridity, but continue them with what care and diligence possibly they are able, that these I say, depart from this table recreated with many heavenly consolations, and much spirituall ioy, seinge they find nothinge to be omitted on their partes. It is but a small matter to protract prayer for a longe space when it floweth with consolations, but when these are taken away, not to desist, is an admirable act of vertue: for in this humilitty shineth, patience is eminent, and true perseuerance in good workes, is manifested.

But it is necessary in the time, of aridity, to haue a greater care of himselfe, watchinge ouer himselfe with greater diligence, to discusse his conscience more sincerely, and to obserue all his wordes and actions more accurately. For then when alacrity and spirituall ioy (which is the principall oare of this nauigation) is absent, with greater vigilance the defect of grace is to be supplied.

When thou findest thy selfe to be in this state, thou oughtest to thinke, as S.

BER-

There-ward of those who in the time of drynesse of spirit, doe not leane of their wonted exercises.

BERNARD admonisheth, that the sentinells which did watch thee, are a sleepe, that the walls that did defend thee, are broken downe, and therefore the only hope of safegard to consist in armes, when all is gone which did otherwise protect thee, safety is to be sought with an armed hand. O what deserued glory followeth such a soule, which winneth the triumphant lawrell after such a manner, she fighteth a combate with the enemie without either sword or buckler, is valient without helpe, who although she be alone susteineth the wholl battaile, with as much courage, as though she were compassed round about with troopes of auxiliatorie forces.

This is the cheifest prooffe, wherby the syncerity, and goodnes of the freindes of God is knowne, wherby the true are secured from false seruantes.

*A remedie for the second temptation.*

*What to  
doe vvhē  
vve haue  
vnprofitable  
thoughtes.*

**A**gainst the temptation of importune and vnprofitable cogitations which are wont to vex those that pray, and disquiet them with no small molestation, this is the remedie. To resist them manfully, prouided alwayes, that resistance be not  
ioy-

ioyned with too much violence and anxietie of spirit. Seeing this worke dependeth not so much of our strength, as God almighties grace and profound humilitie. Wherfore when any one is besett with these temptatiōs, let him confidently tourne himselfe to God without any scruple or anxietie of mind, (seeing this is no fault or at least a very small one) with great submission and deuotion of heart, sayinge, behould Lord, behould what I am? what other thinge can be looked for frō this ordure but such filthy sauours? What other fruite can be expected from this earth which thou didest curse in the beginninge of the world, but thornes and thistles? What good cā it bringe forth, except thou lord doest purge it from all corruptiō? this beinge said, let him retourne to cōtinue his meditations with patience expectinge the visitation of our lord, who is neuer wantinge to the humble of spirit. If yet the tumult of these troublesome fancies doth not cease, neuertheless let him still resist constantly, repellinge the force of them to the vttermost of his power. From this perseuerant battaile (beleue me) he will reape more gaine and merite, then if he had enioyed the greatest consolations in his meditation.

*A remedy for the third temptation.*

**T**O ouercome the temptation of blasphemous thoughtes, we must knowe as there is no temptation so troublesome to a pious mind. So likewise there is none less dangerous. Therefore the best remedie is to contemne them. For seeinge sinne consisteth not in sense, but delight of those thinges we thinke of. But in these there is no pleasure, but rather tortour. Therefore they may chalinge the name of punishment rather then of sinne. And the more vexatiō is in them, the further of we are from consentinge vnto any sinne, therefore it is best not to feare, but contemne them: seeinge feare maketh them more stronge and violent.

*A remedie for the fourth temptation.*

**A**gainst the temptations of infidelitie, he who is vexed with such cogitations, on the one side let him consider the imbecilitie of mans condition, on the other side the greatnes of the diuine power, to whom nothinge is imposible: those thinges which God hath commanded let him alwayes bare in mind; for others let him

newer

neuer busy himselte in searchinge curiously the workes of supreme maicettie, seeinge the least of them doe farr transcend humane capacity. Wherefore he that delireth to enter in to this sainctuary of Gods workes, let him enter with profound humility and reuerence, endued with the eies of a simple doue, not of a subtile serpent: and let him bare the mind of a meeke disciple, and not of a temerarious iudge, let him put on the shape of a child for since our lord maketh partakers of his diuine secretes, let him not minde to search or knowe the causes of Gods workes, let him shutt the eies of naturall reason, and open the eies of faith. For these are the hādes wherewith Gods workes ought to be handled. Humane vnderstandinge is able to comprehend the workes of men, but not of God, seeinge they are not capable of so much light.

This temptation seeinge it is one of the greatest, which doth assault men, and bringeth none, or small delight with it, is to be cured with the remedie of the precedent temptation. That is, to make slight of it, for it cannot staine the soule with any great blemish, because where the will is contrarie there is no daunger of any sinne.

*Inconsidering Gods workes good beed ought to be taken.*

*Temptations of thoughtes of blasphemy ought to be contemned.*

*A remedy for the fifth temptation.*

**T**Here are some who are troubled with many feares and fancies when they goe to pray in solitary places, remote from the company of men, against which temptation, there is no more efficacious remedie then for a mā to arme himselfe with a curragious mind, perseuering in his exercise, for this feare is ouercome with fightinge, not with flyinge: moreouer let him consider, that the deuill nor any other thinge what soeuer else can hurt vs, except God permitts. Let him also consider, that we are compassed about with a custody of Angels, which doe guard vs, as well in, as out of prayer, they assist vs carryinge vp our prayers to heauen, they help vs to bringe to nothinge the deuises of our crafty enemie, and to confound all his mischeiuous plottes.

*Feare is  
ouercome  
with  
fightinge  
not with  
flyinge.*



A 76-

*A remedie for the sixth temptation.*

**T**O ouercome sleepe, wherwith some, that meditate are often molested: we must consider, that sometime it proceedeth from mere necessity, and then it is not to be denied the body what is its due, least it hindreth what is our right. Some times it proceedeth out of infirmitie, then he must take heede not to vex himselfe too much, seeinge herein is no sinne at all: but moderately as much as strength suffereth, resistinge it: nowe vsinge some industry, then some small violēce, that prayer doth not altogether perish, without which, nothinge in this life cā be had secure, but when it cometh out of slouth, or from the deuill, then there is no better remedie then to abstaine from wine, and not to vse water in abundance, but as much as quenchem his thirst, to pray vpon his knees, or after some other painefull gesture of the body, let him vse discipline or other corporall austeritie to driue sleepe from his eies. To conclude, the remedie of this, and all others is, instantly to implore his assistance, who is ready to giue it to all, so they aske it feruently and constantly.

*Drone  
nes in  
prayer ar-  
rises  
from a  
threefold  
cause.*

L

A 76-

*A remedie for the seauenth temptation.*

**A**gainst the temptations of diffidence and presumption, seeinge they in them selues be contrary, it is requisite to apply diuers remedies. Against diffidence: let him consider, that we doe not rest vpon our owne merits, but vpon God almighties grace, who is so much the more willinge to assist man, by how much the more he is diffident of his owne forces, placinge a firme hope in the goodnes of God, to whome nothinge is impossible: the remedy for presumption is, to consider, that the most euident and certaine argument is, that a man is yet furthest from true sanctitie, when he thinketh himselfe to be neerest.

More-ouer let him looke vpon himselfe in the liues of saintes, who nowe raigne with CHRIST, or liue yet in this mortall life, as in a lookinge glasse, to which of these he doth compare himselfe, he will see, that he is no more then a dwarfe in respect of a giant, which consideration will not a little suppress his pride.

A 76.

*A remedie for the eighth temptation.*

**A**gainst the inordinate desire of studie and learninge: it is good to consider how farr vertue exceedeth science: and how much the knowledge of God excelleth humane wisdom. Hence a man may learne how necessarie it is, to bestowe more labour vpon one, then vpon the other. More-ouer the world hath all the excellence that can be desired, but cannot auoyd this misery, that it must end with life. What then more miserable then to seeke after that with so much labour, and expence which so quickly perisheth? If all things in the world could be knowne, they are but as nothinge, and therefore it is much better to exercise our selues in the loue of God, the fruite wherof remaineth for euer, and in whome we see and knowe, all things. Last of all, in the day of iudgment, we shall not be asked what we haue read, but what we haue done, not how eloquently we haue spoken, but how well we haue liued.

*The diuine wisdom doth infinitely exceed humane prudence.*

L 2

A 76.

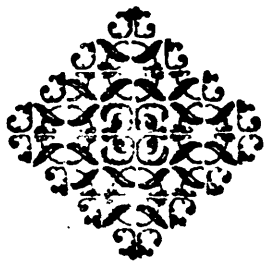
*Man ought chiefly to rely vpon Gods grace not his owne merits.*



*A remedie for the ninth temptation.*

*The sal-  
uation of  
our nei-  
bour is so  
to be re-  
garded  
that vve  
doe not  
neglect  
our  
ovvne  
soules.*

**T**He cheifest remedie against indiscreet zeale of helpinge others, is, so to attende to the good of our neighbours, that we hurte not our selues: and so to haue a care of the consciences of others, that we neglect not our owne, but in assistinge the it is good to referue so much time, as is sufficient to conserue the heart in deuotion and recollection. And this is, as S. PAVLE saith: *Ambulare in spiritu*: to walke in spirit, that is to say that a man be more in God then in himselfe. Seeinge therefore that the prime roote of all our good vpon this dependeth, we must striue, that our prayer be so profounde and longe, as may conserue the soule in deuotion, which euery short meditation is not able to doe, but deuoute and longe.



CHAP.

## CHAP. V.

*Other certaine admonitions necessarie for spirituall persons.*

**T**HE thinge that affordeth greatest difficulty in this spirituall iournie, is, to knowe how to come to God, and to conuerse with him familiarly. Let therefore none dare to enter into this way without a good guide, and well instructed with necessarie admonitions and documentes, of which we will sett downe a fewe, accordinge to our wounted breuitie.

The first is, wherby we are taught what end we must aime at in these our spirituall exercises. We must therefore knowe that since to communicate with God almightie of it selfe is most delightfull, hauinge no bitternes mixed with it, as the wise man testifieth: hence it cometh to passe that many allured with the pleasure of this admirable and vnused sweetnes (which is greater then can be comprehended) come to God and frequent these spirituall actions, as readinge, prayer, meditation, vse of the Sacra-

*The error  
and abuse  
of some.*

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ment,

ment, for the great contēt and delight they take in them, so that for the principall end wherwith they are moued, is this admirable sweetnes which they vehemently desire. This is a great error and many are plunged in it, for seeinge to loue and seeke God should be the cheifest end of all our actions, these loue and seeke themselves, that is to say, their owne gust and sensible delight, rather than God, which was the scope of the contemplatiue Philosophie of the gentills. Especially as a certaine Doctour saith, that this is a kind of auarice, luxurie, and spirituall gluttonie, no less pernicious then carnall. From this error springeth an other braunch. (To wit) that many iudge themselves, and others accordinge to the ebbing, and flowing of consolations, so farr that they are persvaded, that a man is more, or lesse perfect by howe much more or lesse, he is visited with diuine consolatiōs. This is a great mistake.

*What  
should be  
the end of  
spirituall  
exercises.*

Against both these temptations this generall doctrine is a remedy: that euerie one must knowe that the scope of all these exercises, and the cheife end of a spirituall life, is the obseruinge of Gods cōmaudemētes, and a perfect fullfillinge of his diuine vvill: to this it is necessarie that our ovvne vvill be mortified, that the vvill of God may the  
bet-

better liue and raigne in vs. Seeinge both these are directly contrarie the one to the other. But this noble victorie seeinge it cannot be obtained vvithout speciall fauour and allurementes of God, therefore vve ought to frequent the exercise of prayer, the better by it (and indeed the only meanes) to obtaine this grace, and to bringe this serious busines of our soules perfection to a good and desired end. With this intention vve may confidently desire of God internall consolations, as vve haue saied before. This did the Prophet DAVID vvhen he saied: *Redde mihi Domine latitiam salutaris tui, & spiritu principali confirma me:* Giue me, ô Lord, the ioy of thy saluation, and confirme me with thy principall spirit.

Hence it is manifest, what end euerie one ought to prefix to himselfe in these exercises, and howe they should esteeme and measure their owne and others profit: not accordinge to the multitude of flowinge consolations. But accordinge to those things they haue constantly suffered for God, partly in fullfillinge his diuine pleasure, partly in renouncinge their owne proper wills.

And that this ought to be the end of all our prayer and readinge it appeareth by that one Psalme of the Prophet DAVID

which beginneth: *Beati immaculati in via, qui ambulant in lege Domini*: Blessed are the immaculate in the way, which walke in the lawe of our Lord. Which is the longest Psalme in the Psalter, notwithstandinge there is not one verse in it, in which there is not mention of the lawe of God, and keepinge his cōmaudemētes. Which the holy Ghost hath so ordeined, that mē may learne to direct all prayer, and readinge to this end and scope. From which they that doe decline, doe cast themselues into the secret snares of the enemy, who with his suttle craft perswadeth them that, that is some great matter which indeed is nothings, and for this cause men most exercised in spirituall matters doe affirme, the only touchstone of true vertue to be, not that sensible delight which is founde in prayer: but patience in affliction, abnegation of ones owne selfe, a sincere and enteire fullfillinge of the diuine will, and finally in a diligent obseruinge of God almighties lawes and cōmaudemētes, though I must confesse that prayer it selfe, and the frequēt consolatiōs that are founde therin, doe not a little conduce and help to the better effectinge of these thinges fore mentioned.

They which are desirous to knowe how much progresse they haue made in the

the way of God, let them examine how much they haue increased in interiour and exterior humilitie: how willingly they haue put vp iniuries, with what minde they haue borne with others infirmitie: how they haue compationated the imperfections of their neighbours: what confidence they haue had in God in the tedious time of tribulation: how they haue bridled their tongues: how they haue kept their heart: how they haue mortified their flesh with all vnlawfull delightes, and made it subiect to the spirit. With what moderation they haue behaued them selues in prosperitie and aduersitie; With what grauitie and discretion they haue gouerned all their actions: and aboue all how dead they haue beene to the world, with all its pleasures, honours, and dignities: and accordingly as they haue profited in these vertues let them measure their perfection, and not accordinge to the consolations wherwith God hath visited them, wherfore let euerie one be sure to beare one hande and the cheifest ouer himselfe in mortification, the other in prayer, seeinge the one can not be attained vnto without the other.

*The signes by which we may coniecture howe much we haue profited in the way of perfection.*

*The second Admonition.*

**A**S it is not lawfull to desire consolations and spirituall comforts, to that end, that in them we should sett vp our rest, but only as they assist vs in our spirituall progresse, much lesse is it lawfull to wish for visions, reuelations and the like, which to those who are not well grounded in humility, may be a great cause of their vtter ruine, neither is there any reason to feare, that those who refuse or reiect thē should be disobedient to God, because when it shall please God to reueale any thinge, he will doe it after such a fashion, that he to whome such things shall be reuealed, shalbe so certaine of them, that he will haue no reason either to feare or doubt, though he should himselfe neuer so much strue against them.

*The third Admonition.*

**W**E must haue a speciall care, not to speake to others, those sensible consolations, which God almightie hath bene pleased to recreate vs with all. Except it be to our spirituall directour. Hence it is that, that mellifluous Doctour was wont  
to

to aduise euery one to haue these wordes written in great letters in his chamber:  
MY SECRET TO MY SELFE: MY  
SECRET TO MY SELFE.

*The fowrth Admonition.*

**M**oreouer we must alwayes take <sup>we</sup> good heede to deal with God, <sup>must</sup> with much humilitie and reuerence, neuer <sup>all vvaies</sup> to esteeme our selues so high in his fauour, <sup>remaine</sup> as we neglect to cast downe our eies vpon <sup>in humili-</sup> our owne basenes, and to shrowd our winges in the presence of so great a maiestie, as holy S. AVGVSTINE was wont to doe, of whome it is written, that he had learned to reioyce before God with feare and tremblinge.

*The fifth Admonition.*

**W**E haue heretofore counsailed the seruant of God, that he cōsecrateth some certaine time of the day to recollectiō. But now besids the ordinarie course, we say, that he must some times sequester himselfe from all busines, and employments, as much as is possible, and giue himselfe wholly ouer to deuotion, the better to satt his soule with the aboundance of spirituall dainties, recoueringe his dayly losses, and  
get-

gettinge newe force to goe forward in his spirituall iourny. Which although it be not amisse to doe at all times, yet more specially, vpon the principall feasts of the yeare: in the time of temptation: after a longe iourny: after troublesome busines, which gaue matter of much distraction, that then we exclude from our soules all exteriour thinges, and call our selues back againe to the point from whence we did digresse.

*The sixth Admonition.*

**T**Here be many which be not discreet in their spirituall exercises, when they enjoy heauenly consolations, and it oftentimes falleth out, that this prosperitie doth expose them to manifest perill, for when God almightie sheweth downe, more abundantly this celestiall dewe, vpon their soules, they are so rauished with the sweetness of it, that they addiect themselves without measure to this only exercise: to this end they prolonge the time of prayer, macerate themselves with watchinge and other corporall austerities, so that nature it selfe at length is constrained to sinke vnder the burthen of such indiscreet mortification. Hence it cometh to passe, that many  
ab-

abhorre spirituall exercises, and some are not only made by this meanes vnfit for corporall, but also dull for spirituall labours of prayer and meditation. Wherefore in all these, there is great neede of discretion, especially in the beginninge, when spirituall consolations be more feruent, and commonly whē discretion is least. For we must so order our diet that we doe not faint in the middest of our iourny. On the contrary there be some so slouthfull and vndeuous, that vnder the colour of discretion, immoderately make much of themselves, refusinge the least labour, or trouble. This although it be dangerous to all, but especially to beginners. For as S. BERNARD saith, it is impossible that he should perseuer longe in a spirituall course, who is discreet at first. That whē he is a nouice esteemeth himselfe wise, and when he is younge governeth himselfe like an old man. Neither can I easily iudge which of these, be more dangerous. Except, as THOMAS A KEMPIS saith, the first is more incurable, for whilst the body is stronge and sounde, there may be hopes to cure tepidity: but when it is once weakened through indiscretion, it scarce euer can be brought to its former feruour.

*The seventh Admonition.*

**T**Here is yet an other daunger, more pernicious then the former, which is, that some hauinge experience of this inestimable vertue of prayer, that all the fruite of a spirituall life doth depend vpon it. Hence they perswade themselues, that in it all is conteined. And that only, that vertue doth suffice for our saluation, which makes them to neglect other vertues, which are likewise the foundations and proppes which doe vphold a spirituall buildinge, which beinge taken away the wholl fabrick falleth to ruine; wherfore they that seeke after this one only vertue with such indiscreet auditie, the more they labour the lesse fuite they reape. But the seruant of God that expecteth merit and comfort in the way of perfection must not fix his eies so much vpon one only vertue, although it be neuer so rare and excellent, but generally attend to all, as one stringe vpon an instrument maketh no musique, except we strike the rest: so one vertue cannot make a spirituall harmonic in our soules, if the other be

wan-

wantinge, not vnlike a clock, which if there be but a fault in one whele, the others will stand. So it is in a spirituall clock, if one vertue be deficient.

*The eighth Document.*

**T**Hese thinges which we haue hertherto saied, which doe help to deuotion. Are so to be taken as preparatories, wherwith a man doth dispose himselfe to God almightie his grace, and behaue himselfe manfully in his holy seruice, with this caution, that we should not put our confidence in them, but in God.

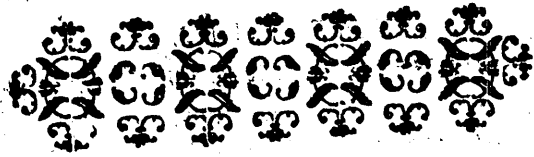
This I say because, there are some which labour to reduce all rules into art, thinkinge that they haue attained to the perfection of that exercise, if they obserue exactly the rules therof. But they which put good principalls into practice, vwill quickly attaine vnto their desired end, vvhich doinge, they care not to reduce grace into art, nor to attribute that to humane rules, vvhich is the gift of God. Hēce vve say that it is not necessaric to follove these rules, and documentes as dependinge of art, but as instrumentes of grace. Because

a man

a man vwill learne thus to knowve, that the principall meanes, vvhich one ought to seeke after, is profound humilitie, vvith the consideration of our ovvne basenes, and a great confidence in God almighties mercie. To the end that vve may come to the knowvledge of the one and the other, let vs povvre out teares vvithout intermission, and continually pray, that as vve expect at the gate of humilitie, so vve may obtaine by it, all our desires, and perseuere in humble thankesgiunge to the diuine bountie, vvithout any trust to our ovvne vvorkes or any thinge that is ours.

AD HONOREM DEI.

FINIS.



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